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THE WORKS OF

# HENRY FIELDING

IN TWELVE VOLUMES

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AMELIA COMES TO BOOTH IN PRISON

"*Where is he?*"

PAGE 222

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THE WORKS OF HENRY FIELDING

VOLUME SEVEN

# AMELIA

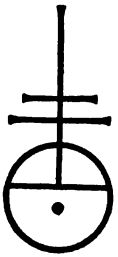
COMPLETE IN THREE PARTS

PART I.

WITH THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE, AND AN INTRODUCTION BY

G. H. MAYNADIER, PH.D.

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, HARVARD UNIVERSITY



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# DEDICATION

## To RALPH ALLEN, Esq.

SIR,—The following book is sincerely designed to promote the cause of virtue, and to expose some of the most glaring evils, as well public as private, which at present infest the country; though there is scarce, as I remember, a single stroke of satire aimed at any one person throughout the whole.

The best man is the properest patron of such an attempt. This, I believe, will be readily granted; nor will the public voice, I think, be more divided to whom they shall give that appellation. Should a letter, indeed, be thus inscribed, DETUR OPTIMO, there are few persons who would think it wanted any other direction.

I will not trouble you with a preface concerning the work, nor endeavour to obviate any criticisms which can be made on it. The good-natured reader, if his heart should be here affected, will be inclined to pardon many faults for the pleasure he will receive from a tender sensation: and for readers of a different stamp, the more faults they can discover, the more, I am convinced, they will be pleased.

Nor will I assume the fulsome stile of common dedicators. I have not their usual design in this



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epistle, nor will I borrow their language. Long, very long may it be before a most dreadful circumstance shall make it possible for any pen to draw a just and true character of yourself without incurring a suspicion of flattery in the bosoms of the malignant. This task, therefore, I shall defer till that day (if I should be so unfortunate as ever to see it) when every good man shall pay a tear for the satisfaction of his curiosity; a day which, at present, I believe, there is but one good man in the world who can think of it with unconcern.

Accept then, sir, this small token of that love, that gratitude, and that respect, with which I shall always esteem it my GREATEST HONOUR to be, Sir,

Your most obliged, and
most obedient, humble servant,
HENRY FIELDING.

*Bow Street, Dec. 2, 1751.*



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# INTRODUCTION

BETWEEN the publication of *Tom Jones*, in February, 1749, and that of *Amelia*, in December, 1751, Fielding added to his knowledge of life nothing which was important in his literary development. True, as a justice of the peace, he still had many opportunities, in these scant three years, to observe mankind; but nothing came into his experience, like the Jacobite rising and the death of Mrs. Fielding in the years preceding *Tom Jones*, to stir his nature deeply. On the whole, his life was now uneventful. Though vexed by persistent money difficulties and by failing health, he seems to have lived happily with his second wife and his children. His conscientious work as magistrate kept him from any important publication except *An Enquiry into the Causes of the late Increase of Robbers, etc., with some Proposition for remedying this growing Evil*, a thoughtful pamphlet published in 1751. In short, the Fielding who wrote *Amelia* was the same Fielding who wrote *Tom Jones*, except that failing health and strength had made him less vigorous physically. As to his philosophy of life, already expounded in *Tom Jones*, he had nothing different to say. It is not surprising, therefore, that many critics should declare the later novel to differ from the earlier mainly in being less



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vigorous. That it is somehow a little inferior, seems to have been the common (and I think the just) opinion. There is a sign that its publisher, Andrew Millar, thought so, in his resorting to a ruse to ensure a good sale for the first edition.[1] I am not certain, though, that we have hit on the right expression when we say that the slight inferiority of *Amelia* to *Tom Jones* manifests itself in lessened vigour.

Whether or not the falling off be one of vigour, it is not sufficient to prevent *Amelia* from being, like its predecessor, a very great work. In determining its relative greatness, if we apply such tests as we have already applied to *Tom Jones*, we shall find that here again is a novel which may stand among the comparatively few that are excellent. Throughout *Amelia* there is a sense of the seriousness of life, of that deep meaning which is indispensable to the greatest art. Like *Tom Jones*, again, it gives some idea of the complexity of life, though again an incomplete idea. Still again, there is the same practical manly preaching in *Amelia* that is in

[1] Scott, in *Henry Fielding* in his *Biographical and Critical Notices of Eminent Novelists*, says: "Millar published *Amelia* in 1751. He had paid a thousand pounds for the copyright; and when he began to suspect that the work would be judged inferior to its predecessors, he employed the following stratagem to push it upon the trade. At a sale made to the booksellers, previous to the publication, Millar offered his friends his other publications on the usual terms of discount; but when he came to *Amelia*, he laid it aside, as a work expected to be in such demand that he could not afford to deliver it to the trade in the usual manner. The *ruse* succeeded, the impression was anxiously bought up, and the bookseller relieved from every apprehension of a slow sale."



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*Tom Jones* and *Joseph Andrews* both, though in all three scarcely ever obtrusive. It teaches the same lesson, too, as the preaching in *Tom Jones:* that hypocrisy is the blackest of vices, and that kindness and honesty may sometimes atone for fleshly indulgences. Incidentally it may be noted that even the stories of the two books are alike. In each the central character is deeply wronged, — in the later novel by a hypocritical sister instead of by a hypocritical brother as in the earlier; and in the telling of the story, masculine weakness (of which there is more in *Amelia* than in *Tom Jones*) is again censured and pardoned, and feminine virtue is extolled.

When two novels are so nearly alike in purpose, in this respect at least, any question of superiority or inferiority, of greater or lesser vigour, is precluded. But workmanship may vary even though the purpose be almost identical; and it is in workmanship that Fielding's last novel falls below his masterpiece. *Amelia* is not such a good work of art as *Tom Jones;* it has neither such a good plot nor such good movement. Though one of the least lively ways of telling a story is to make it for any length of time the narrative of one of the characters, Fielding gives the greater part of the first three books to the circumstantial relations of Miss Matthews and Booth. Even when we are done with Booth's long history, the story still drags; its movement is not rapid or always direct. There are some irrelevant scenes, and except from the ninth book to the end there is nothing like the quickness of the narrative in *Tom Jones.* To



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some people, this slower motion of *Amelia* will not seem a fault. It has been rather the fashion of late years, as Stevenson noted,[1] for readers of novels "to look . . . down on incident, and reserve their admiration for the clink of teaspoons and the accents of the curate." But the history of literature proves such taste to be unnatural. From Malory's *Morte Darthur* to Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, and from that to the best story in the latest magazine, the English fiction which has interested most people is that which has had most action. One reason, I believe, that readers have found *Amelia* less interesting than *Tom Jones* or *Joseph Andrews* is because it moves more slowly.

This slowness of movement, I am inclined to think, has done more than detract from the interest of *Amelia;* it has had a good deal to do in forming the opinion that here Fielding writes as an older and less vigorous man than in his earlier novels. In one or two respects, it is true, he does seem older; in others, he is as young as ever. Fielding kept the heart of youth to his grave; and in *Amelia* there is no dulling of his wit or cooling of his warm-hearted charity. A reader is likely to feel, however, some waning of physical vigour; *Amelia* lacks the exuberant vitality of *Tom Jones* and *Joseph Andrews*. But such a lack does not necessarily mean that Fielding had no longer the ability to put such vitality into his work. It is the ever-moving incident of the country scenes which goes farthest in giving that impression of energetic life which is so remarkable

[1] *A Gossip on Romance* in *Memories and Portraits*.



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in Fielding's earlier novels; when the characters of these are settled in London, they do not impress you as having the same superabundant vitality. Now, except in the narratives of Miss Matthews and Booth, which we have already seen to be the least vivid part of the novel, nearly all the action of *Amelia* takes place in London: we have no chance to squabble with churlish innkeepers and their wives, to breathe the fresh air along the country roads, and to follow the hounds in Somersetshire. When we consider feats of eating and drinking, however, and enjoyment of city diversions, I am inclined to think that Booth and his friends are every whit as vigorous as Jones and his friends. Had Fielding, therefore, taken us out of the metropolis, he would probably have given us again scenes from that full-blooded English country life which he knew so well how to describe. That he did not do so, is to be regretted. Lack of such scenes undeniably makes *Amelia* less entertaining and apparently less robust than its predecessors; but whether the loss of robustness is due more to Fielding's waning strength than to the plan of his novel, is very doubtful.

It is in drawing the characters that Fielding seems to me, if anywhere in *Amelia*, to show lessening vigour. Though the reality of the background is as remarkable as we expect to find it, the strong, steady touch which we expect in the individualisation of the characters is not always apparent. Two of them are even shadowy, — the noble peer and Murphy. The plausible Mrs. Ellison, however, is distinct; and so are Colonel and



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Mrs. James; their touchy, military brother, Colonel Bath; and likewise the faithful Atkinson and his wife, a lady whose nobility of nature is unfortunately marred by her choleric disposition and self-satisfied scholarship. On the whole, I am not surprised that Dr. Harrison disliked her. This worthy man is distinct, too, — a man as good as Allworthy and perhaps a little more human, but injured by a pedantry which Allworthy was happily without. Yes, all these are distinct, though somehow not quite vivified, not quite flesh and blood, like the friends and acquaintances of the Booby and Allworthy and Western families.

In the reality of three characters, however, *Amelia* could not be surpassed: I mean Miss Matthews, Booth, and Amelia herself. Miss Matthews, like Partridge, Smollett declared that Fielding stole from *Roderick Random*, though I think in this case with less reason than in the other. Her type is common enough in the capitals of the world to make it unnecessary to seek her original in Random's friend, Miss Williams, or in any other character of a book; and in her good breeding, which she can still recall when she pleases, in her self-indulgence, her selfish kindness to Booth, her jealous rage, and her extravagance, — in all these she is perfectly individual and perfectly real. Nor does it matter that Booth is a sort of degraded Tom Jones; he is still perfectly individual and perfectly real. He is not so lovable a man as Tom, for he is weaker; in regard to money matters he has even less conscience than Tom; and he is a gambler, which Tom is not. His unfaith-



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fulness to his wife, moreover, admits of none of the excuse which may be made for Tom's lapses from virtue in the days when he has not awakened to the charm of Sophia, or when he sees no prospect of making that young lady his wife. Nor do Booth's physical beauty and bravery and good-nature incline us to forgive his graver shortcomings so readily as we forgive Jones's, especially since he has not the same right as Tom, by six or eight years, to put forth the plea of youth. The saving grace in Booth, the one thing which makes us keep our regard for him, is his steady comprehension of his wife's excellence.

If the characters that I have named are, with two exceptions, less real than we expect characters to be whom Fielding has created, the reason is very likely, as Mr. Dobson has suggested, that *Amelia* is a "one-part piece."[1] All the personages, even Booth and Miss Matthews, who are as alive as the men you meet at your clubs or the women you see at showy restaurants, — even these are subordinate to the heroine. No other of Fielding's characters, on coming upon the stage, so dominates it as Amelia when she makes her appearance. And yet Amelia is only a married Sophia Western, though Sophia, I am sure, was less vexed in her married life than Amelia in hers. Still, it is not odd, for all this resemblance, that Sophia does not hold the centre of the stage as Amelia does. In *Tom Jones*, Fielding's object is to depict what he, rightly or wrongly, takes to be a lovable and not unusual kind of young gentleman.

[1] *Henry Fielding*, New York, 1900, p. 213.



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The heroine, interested as Fielding becomes in her, real as he makes her, exists chiefly to reward the hero. In *Amelia*, on the other hand, Fielding's object is to depict what he takes to be the best type of woman. Booth, real as he is, exists chiefly to be the father of Amelia's children and to add to her trials.

Just in this, that it makes clearer to us than any of his other works the kind of woman whom Fielding liked best, *Amelia* is necessary to a full understanding of his philosophy of life; it says definitely what *Tom Jones* has not made quite certain. Fielding had nothing more to say about his favourite man, a man whose characteristic faults are most easily pardoned when he is a bachelor: we are tolerably sure that Jones has sowed his wild oats once and for all, and that he will find in Sophia an excellent wife. But what if he had not sowed all his wild oats? Would she still make him an excellent wife? Would she be patient of his shortcomings and still appreciative of his virtues? Because Fielding had not made this matter quite clear, it remained for him to give us his story of married life, — to show us not only a married Sophia but a sadly tried Sophia.

Trials are not too much for Fielding's wedded heroine, however; she bears them all superlatively well. It is hard to say which scenes exhibit her sweetness and forbearance best, but I am inclined to name the two that have been famous since the first appearance of *Amelia*. One is the scene in which Mrs. Booth, sitting down in her husband's absence to



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the hashed mutton she had carefully prepared for him, denied herself half a pint of wine to save "the little sum of sixpence . . . while her husband was paying a debt of several guineas incurred by the ace of trumps being in the hands of his adversary." The other scene is that in which she shows Booth the letter which she had received from Miss Matthews some time before, revealing his amour with that lady, — knowledge of which Amelia was by word or deed so far from suggesting that both Booth and Miss Matthews, who believed such forbearance impossible, were sure that the letter had miscarried.

It is Stevenson, I think, who said, "I do not believe that Fielding was ever in love." That any one should read *Tom Jones* and *Amelia* understandingly and still believe that Fielding was never in love seems incomprehensible. Whether or not genuinely in love with his boyish flame, Miss Andrew, he was afterwards in love at least three times as sincerely as man can be, — first, with Miss Charlotte Cradock, who became his wife, and afterwards with her counterparts, Sophia Western and Amelia Booth. He himself tells us that Sophia represents his wife before marriage, and we have it on the authority of his cousin, Lady Bute, Lady Mary's daughter, that Amelia represents his wife in her married days. Her picture, said Lady Bute, "he drew in his Amelia," and "the glowing language he knew how to employ did not do more than justice to the amiable qualities of the original or to her beauty."[1] It is for the very

[1] *Correspondence of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, 1804, iv. p. 60.



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reason that Fielding was so deeply in love with his first wife that he painted her maiden portrait in *Tom Jones*, and her noble wifely portrait in *Amelia*. Subsequent writers have placed pictures beside the first which equal it though none surpass it; but in all our prose fiction, is there to this day a portrait of a wife quite so lovely, so charming, as that of Amelia?

With *Amelia* Fielding brought to an end the kind of work which keeps his name alive. He was to engage in a little more periodical work, he was to write an account of a very remarkable alleged abduction — the *Clear State of the Case of Elizabeth Canning* — and he was to perform great services in freeing London from murderers and robbers; but he was not to take up his pen again in novel-writing. Probably he would have reverted to it, in spite of a declaration to the contrary in a number of the *Covent Garden Journal*,[1] had his life been long; but he was now near the end of his days. His efforts to suppress crime were not less taxing to his strength than successful,[2] and gratifying to the people of the metropolis. Added to his broken health they proved too much for him. And so, suffering from gout and dropsy, he was obliged to sail for Lisbon in June, 1754, in the hope of regaining his strength.

[1] No. 8, January 28th, 1752.

[2] Mr. Dobson, *Henry Fielding*, 1900, p. 239, says, that Fielding's efforts were successful "is confirmed by a paragraph in the *Public Advertiser* for 1 January, 1754, — 'A Gentleman at Genoa writes, that the Letters from Corsica are as full of Housebreakings, Robberies and Murders, as a London newspaper *before Mr. F.'s Plan was carried into Execution.*'"



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The hope was vain. Fielding died at Lisbon on the 8th of October, and there he lies buried.

The amount of Fielding's work in that art which he brought so near perfection is not great, — only three novels, *Joseph Andrews*, *Tom Jones*, and *Amelia*, but in these three he attained almost complete mastery of the art. After his experiment in *Joseph Andrews*, he decided on a plan for his fiction very different from the device of his contemporary, Smollett. The latter is apt to string incidents together for no better reason than that they are connected with the same character; they are so many weeks, or months, or years, picked out at random from the life of a given person. Fielding, on the contrary, tries to select with care only such incidents as fit together to make an artistic unit; and though he relies on incident to stimulate the interest of his reader, his own interest is chiefly in the development of character. In this, he is more like his other contemporary, Richardson, than like Smollett, but he is wholly different from Richardson in method. Richardson, like many later novelists, is impertinently, almost morbidly subjective. Fielding is frequently as objective as Homer. In being so he no doubt added to the difficulty of his task, — that is, to give the impression of real life. It must be easier for a writer to give such an impression when he tells his story in the correspondence or the narrative of one of his important characters, than when, taking advantage of no such aid, he writes as if omniscient. Not only does Fielding write thus, but he voluntarily puts in his way another difficulty. He is for ever remind-



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ing you that he is the manager of his puppets; for ever thrusting his head through the curtains to act as chorus; or telling you an anecdote like a man of the world. The marvel is that, after all, the characters whom he insists to be puppets have seemed to the greatest number of readers more like real people than any other characters in English prose fiction except Thackeray's and some of Miss Austen's. It is another marvel that Thackeray, with his wide realism, has consciously or unconsciously followed Fielding's method of introducing his own personality and his own ironical comments on his characters; and that Miss Austen, too, with her narrower realism, has followed something of the same plan. True, she does not push herself through the curtains, but you often feel that she is close by and laughing in her sleeve at the characters she manipulates.

What the connection is between the half waggish aloofness of these authors and the marvellous reality of their books I am not prepared to say. There may be none; on the other hand, it may be just this aloofness which enables these novelists to depict life so truly; to look upon their characters for the most part dispassionately, and to see that a villain is seldom entirely black, and that in the lives of even heroes and heroines there are ridiculous and unamiable moments. At any rate, whatever the cause, these three writers, Fielding, Thackeray, and Jane Austen, seem to me to have in fuller measure than any others that persuasive reality which no great novel, no matter how romantic, can altogether lack. Yet in two of them (and to some extent even in



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Thackeray) is apparent that limitation which I mentioned in writing of *Tom Jones*, — too strait circumscription by a sense of fact, too little realisation of the poetry of life. If, therefore, you are looking for poetry in a novel, go to some one else than these great three — say to Mr. Meredith. If you are looking for the romance of the past, together with wholesome fact and wholesome feeling, go of course to the mighty Sir Walter. For diverting oddities joined frequently with healthy sentiment, turn to Smollett or Dickens. For serious ethical purpose in a novel, turn to George Eliot. For more seriousness yet — seriousness out of all artistic proportion — turn to some of the "problem" novels of late years. But if you want the truth of every-day human existence set forth by human beings who seek conscientiously to picture the truth as they see it, turn to Miss Austen, who will give it to you from the point of view of a lady with a limited experience of the world. For truth to life on a larger scale, turn to Thackeray, a gentleman of wide experience, writing in the purity of the Victorian Age. For still more candid and also more matter-of-fact truth, turn to Fielding, the most sanely frank of all novelists. "Since the author of *Tom Jones* was buried," wrote Thackeray in the preface to *Pendennis*, "no writer of fiction among us has been permitted to depict to his utmost power A MAN. We must drape him, and give him a certain conventional simper. Society will not tolerate the Natural in our Art. . . . You will not hear — it is best to know it — what moves in the real world,



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what passes in society, in the clubs, colleges, newsrooms — what is the life and talk of your sons." But Fielding could do more than depict to his utmost power a man. After reading *Amelia*, few people will say that he could not also graphically depict a woman.

G. H. MAYNADIER.



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# AMELIA

## BOOK I

### CHAPTER ONE

CONTAINING THE EXORDIUM, ETC.

THE various accidents which befel a very worthy couple after their uniting in the state of matrimony will be the subject of the following history. The distresses which they waded through were some of them so exquisite, and the incidents which produced these so extraordinary, that they seemed to require not only the utmost malice, but the utmost invention, which superstition hath ever attributed to Fortune: though whether any such being interfered in the case, or, indeed, whether there be any such being in the universe, is a matter which I by no means presume to determine in the affirmative. To speak a bold truth, I am, after much mature deliberation, inclined to suspect that the public voice hath, in all ages, done much injustice to Fortune, and hath convicted her of many facts in which she had not the least concern. I question much whether we may not, by natural means, account for the success of knaves, the calamities of fools, with all the miseries in which men of sense sometimes involve themselves, by quitting the directions of Prudence, and follow-



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ing the blind guidance of a predominant passion; in short, for all the ordinary phenomena which are imputed to Fortune; whom, perhaps, men accuse with no less absurdity in life, than a bad player complains of ill luck at the game of chess.

But if men are sometimes guilty of laying improper blame on this imaginary being, they are altogether as apt to make her amends by ascribing to her honours which she as little deserves. To retrieve the ill consequences of a foolish conduct, and by struggling manfully with distress to subdue it, is one of the noblest efforts of wisdom and virtue. Whoever, therefore, calls such a man fortunate, is guilty of no less impropriety in speech than he would be who should call the statuary or the poet fortunate who carved a Venus or who writ an Iliad.

Life may as properly be called an art as any other; and the great incidents in it are no more to be considered as mere accidents than the several members of a fine statue or a noble poem. The critics in all these are not content with seeing anything to be great without knowing why and how it came to be so. By examining carefully the several gradations which conduce to bring every model to perfection, we learn truly to know that science in which the model is formed: as histories of this kind, therefore, may properly be called models of HUMAN LIFE, so, by observing minutely the several incidents which tend to the catastrophe or completion of the whole, and the minute causes whence those incidents are produced, we shall best be instructed in this most useful of all arts, which I call the ART of LIFE.



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## CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORY SETS OUT. OBSERVATIONS ON THE EXCELLENCY OF THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION AND CURIOUS EXAMINATIONS BEFORE A JUSTICE OF PEACE.

ON the first of April, in the year ——, the watchmen of a certain parish (I know not particularly which) within the liberty of Westminster brought several persons whom they had apprehended the preceding night before Jonathan Thrasher, Esq., one of the justices of the peace for that liberty.

But here, reader, before we proceed to the trials of these offenders, we shall, after our usual manner, premise some things which it may be necessary for thee to know.

It hath been observed, I think, by many, as well as the celebrated writer of three letters, that no human institution is capable of consummate perfection. An observation which, perhaps, that writer at least gathered from discovering some defects in the polity even of this well-regulated nation. And, indeed, if there should be any such defect in a constitution which my Lord Coke long ago told us "the wisdom of all the wise men in the world, if they had all met together at one time, could not have equalled," which some of our wisest men who were met together long before said was too good to be altered in any



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particular, and which, nevertheless, hath been mending ever since, by a very great number of the said wise men: if, I say, this constitution should be imperfect, we may be allowed, I think, to doubt whether any such faultless model can be found among the institutions of men.

It will probably be objected, that the small imperfections which I am about to produce do not lie in the laws themselves, but in the ill execution of them; but, with submission, this appears to me to be no less an absurdity than to say of any machine that it is excellently made, though incapable of performing its functions. Good laws should execute themselves in a well-regulated state; at least, if the same legislature which provides the laws doth not provide for the execution of them, they act as Graham would do, if he should form all the parts of a clock in the most exquisite manner, yet put them so together that the clock could not go. In this case, surely, we might say that there was a small defect in the constitution of the clock.

To say the truth, Graham would soon see the fault, and would easily remedy it. The fault, indeed, could be no other than that the parts were improperly disposed.

Perhaps, reader, I have another illustration which will set my intention in still a clearer light before you. Figure to yourself then a family, the master of which should dispose of the several œconomical offices in the following manner; viz. should put his butler in the coach-box, his steward behind his coach, his coachman in the butlery, and his footman



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in the stewardship, and in the same ridiculous manner should misemploy the talents of every other servant; it is easy to see what a figure such a family must make in the world.

As ridiculous as this may seem, I have often considered some of the lower officers in our civil government to be disposed in this very manner. To begin, I think, as low as I well can, with the watchmen in our metropolis, who, being to guard our streets by night from thieves and robbers, an office which at least requires strength of body, are chosen out of those poor old decrepit people who are, from their want of bodily strength, rendered incapable of getting a livelihood by work. These men, armed only with a pole, which some of them are scarce able to lift, are to secure the persons and houses of his majesty's subjects from the attacks of gangs of young, bold, stout, desperate, and well-armed villains.

Quæ non viribus istis
Munera conveniunt.

If the poor old fellows should run away from such enemies, no one I think can wonder, unless it be that they were able to make their escape.

The higher we proceed among our public officers and magistrates, the less defects of this kind will, perhaps, be observable. Mr. Thrasher, however, the justice before whom the prisoners above mentioned were now brought, had some few imperfections in his magistratical capacity. I own, I have been sometimes inclined to think that this office of a justice of peace requires some knowledge of the law: for this



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simple reason; because, in every case which comes before him, he is to judge and act according to law. Again, as these laws are contained in a great variety of books, the statutes which relate to the office of a justice of peace making of themselves at least two large volumes in folio; and that part of his jurisdiction which is founded on the common law being dispersed in above a hundred volumes, I cannot conceive how this knowledge should be acquired without reading; and yet certain it is, Mr. Thrasher never read one syllable of the matter.

This, perhaps, was a defect; but this was not all: for where mere ignorance is to decide a point between two litigants, it will always be an even chance whether it decides right or wrong: but sorry am I to say, right was often in a much worse situation than this, and wrong hath often had five hundred to one on his side before that magistrate; who, if he was ignorant of the law of England, was yet well versed in the laws of nature. He perfectly well understood that fundamental principle so strongly laid down in the institutes of the learned Rochefoucault, by which the duty of self-love is so strongly enforced, and every man is taught to consider himself as the centre of gravity, and to attract all things thither. To speak the truth plainly, the justice was never indifferent in a cause but when he could get nothing on either side.

Such was the justice to whose tremendous bar Mr. Gotobed the constable, on the day above mentioned, brought several delinquents, who, as we have said, had been apprehended by the watch for diverse outrages.



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The first who came upon his trial was as bloody a spectre as ever the imagination of a murderer or a tragic poet conceived. This poor wretch was charged with a battery by a much stouter man than himself; indeed the accused person bore about him some evidence that he had been in an affray, his cloaths being very bloody, but certain open sluices on his own head sufficiently shewed whence all the scarlet stream had issued: whereas the accuser had not the least mark or appearance of any wound. The justice asked the defendant, What he meant by breaking the king's peace? —— To which he answered —— "Upon my shoul I do love the king very well, and I have not been after breaking anything of his that I do know; but upon my shoul this man hath brake my head, and my head did brake his stick; that is all, gra." He then offered to produce several witnesses against this improbable accusation; but the justice presently interrupted him, saying, "Sirrah, your tongue betrays your guilt. You are an Irishman, and that is always sufficient evidence with me."

The second criminal was a poor woman, who was taken up by the watch as a street-walker. It was alleged against her that she was found walking the streets after twelve o'clock, and the watchman declared he believed her to be a common strumpet. She pleaded in her defence (as was really the truth) that she was a servant, and was sent by her mistress, who was a little shopkeeper and upon the point of delivery, to fetch a midwife; which she offered to prove by several of the neighbours, if she was allowed to send for them. The justice asked her why she



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had not done it before? to which she answered, she had no money, and could get no messenger. The justice then called her several scurrilous names, and, declaring she was guilty within the statute of street-walking, ordered her to Bridewell for a month.

A genteel young man and woman were then set forward, and a very grave-looking person swore he caught them in a situation which we cannot as particularly describe here as he did before the magistrate; who, having received a wink from his clerk, declared with much warmth that the fact was incredible and impossible. He presently discharged the accused parties, and was going, without any evidence, to commit the accuser for perjury; but this the clerk dissuaded him from, saying he doubted whether a justice of peace had any such power. The justice at first differed in opinion, and said, "He had seen a man stand in the pillory about perjury; nay, he had known a man in gaol for it too; and how came he there if he was not committed thither?" "Why, that is true, sir," answered the clerk; "and yet I have been told by a very great lawyer that a man cannot be committed for perjury before he is indicted; and the reason is, I believe, because it is not against the peace before the indictment makes it so." "Why, that may be," cries the justice, "and indeed perjury is but scandalous words, and I know a man cannot have no warrant for those, unless you put for rioting[1] them into the warrant."

[1] *Opus est interprete.* By the laws of England abusive words are not punishable by the magistrate; some commissioners of the peace, therefore, when one scold hath applied to them for



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The witness was now about to be discharged, when the lady whom he had accused declared she would swear the peace against him, for that he had called her a whore several times. "Oho! you will swear the peace, madam, will you?" cries the justice: "Give her the peace, presently; and pray, Mr. Constable, secure the prisoner, now we have him, while a warrant is made to take him up." All which was immediately performed, and the poor witness, for want of securities, was sent to prison.

A young fellow, whose name was Booth, was now charged with beating the watchman in the execution of his office and breaking his lanthorn. This was deposed by two witnesses; and the shattered remains of a broken lanthorn, which had been long preserved for the sake of its testimony, were produced to corroborate the evidence. The justice, perceiving the criminal to be but shabbily drest, was going to commit him without asking any further questions. At length, however, at the earnest request of the accused, the worthy magistrate submitted to hear his defence. The young man then alledged, as was in reality the case, "That as he was walking home to his lodging he saw two men in the street cruelly beating a third,

a warrant against another, from a too eager desire of doing justice, have construed a little harmless scolding into a riot, which is in law an outrageous breach of the peace committed by several persons, by three at the least, nor can a less number be convicted of it. Under this word rioting, or riotting (for I have seen it spelt both ways), many thousands of old women have been arrested and put to expense, sometimes in prison, for a little intemperate use of their tongues. This practice began to decrease in the year 1749.



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upon which he had stopt and endeavoured to assist the person who was so unequally attacked; that the watch came up during the affray, and took them all four into custody; that they were immediately carried to the round-house, where the two original assailants, who appeared to be men of fortune, found means to make up the matter, and were discharged by the constable, a favour which he himself, having no money in his pocket, was unable to obtain. He utterly denied having assaulted any of the watchmen, and solemnly declared that he was offered his liberty at the price of half a crown."

Though the bare word of an offender can never be taken against the oath of his accuser, yet the matter of this defence was so pertinent, and delivered with such an air of truth and sincerity, that, had the magistrate been endued with much sagacity, or had he been very moderately gifted with another quality very necessary to all who are to administer justice, he would have employed some labour in cross-examining the watchmen; at least he would have given the defendant the time he desired to send for the other persons who were present at the affray; neither of which he did. In short, the magistrate had too great an honour for truth to suspect that she ever appeared in sordid apparel; nor did he ever sully his sublime notions of that virtue by uniting them with the mean ideas of poverty and distress.

There remained now only one prisoner, and that was the poor man himself in whose defence the last-mentioned culprit was engaged. His trial took but a very short time. A cause of battery and broken



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lanthorn was instituted against him, and proved in the same manner; nor would the justice hear one word in defence; but, though his patience was exhausted, his breath was not; for against this last wretch he poured forth a great many volleys of menaces and abuse.

The delinquents were then all dispatched to prison under a guard of watchmen, and the justice and the constable adjourned to a neighbouring alehouse to take their morning repast.



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## CHAPTER THREE

### CONTAINING THE INSIDE OF A PRISON.

MR. BOOTH (for we shall not trouble you with the rest) was no sooner arrived in the prison than a number of persons gathered round him, all demanding garnish; to which Mr. Booth not making a ready answer, as indeed he did not understand the word, some were going to lay hold of him, when a person of apparent dignity came up and insisted that no one should affront the gentleman. This person then, who was no less than the master or keeper of the prison, turning towards Mr. Booth, acquainted him that it was the custom of the place for every prisoner upon his first arrival there to give something to the former prisoners to make them drink. This, he said, was what they call garnish, and concluded with advising his new customer to draw his purse upon the present occasion. Mr. Booth answered that he would very readily comply with this laudable custom, was it in his power; but that in reality he had not a shilling in his pocket, and, what was worse, he had not a shilling in the world. — "Oho! if that be the case," cries the keeper, "it is another matter, and I have nothing to say." Upon which he immediately departed, and left poor Booth



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to the mercy of his companions, who without loss of time applied themselves to uncasing, as they termed it, and with such dexterity, that his coat was not only stript off, but out of sight in a minute.

Mr. Booth was too weak to resist and too wise to complain of this usage. As soon, therefore, as he was at liberty, and declared free of the place, he summoned his philosophy, of which he had no inconsiderable share, to his assistance, and resolved to make himself as easy as possible under his present circumstances.

Could his own thoughts indeed have suffered him a moment to forget where he was, the dispositions of the other prisoners might have induced him to believe that he had been in a happier place: for much the greater part of his fellow-sufferers, instead of wailing and repining at their condition, were laughing, singing, and diverting themselves with various kinds of sports and gambols.

The first person who accosted him was called Blear-eyed Moll, a woman of no very comely appearance. Her eye (for she had but one), whence she derived her nickname, was such as that nickname bespoke; besides which, it had two remarkable qualities; for first, as if Nature had been careful to provide for her own defect, it constantly looked towards her blind side; and secondly, the ball consisted almost entirely of white, or rather yellow, with a little grey spot in the corner, so small that it was scarce discernible. Nose she had none; for Venus, envious perhaps at her former charms, had carried off the gristly part; and some earthly damsel, perhaps, from



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the same envy, had levelled the bone with the rest of her face: indeed it was far beneath the bones of her cheeks, which rose proportionally higher than is usual. About half a dozen ebeny teeth fortified that large and long canal which nature had cut from ear to ear, at the bottom of which was a chin preposterously short, nature having turned up the bottom, instead of suffering it to grow to its due length.

Her body was well adapted to her face; she measured full as much round the middle as from head to foot; for, besides the extreme breadth of her back, her vast breasts had long since forsaken their native home, and had settled themselves a little below the girdle.

I wish certain actresses on the stage, when they are to perform characters of no amiable cast, would study to dress themselves with the propriety with which Blear-eyed Moll was now arrayed. For the sake of our squeamish reader, we shall not descend to particulars; let it suffice to say, nothing more ragged or more dirty was ever emptied out of the round-house at St. Giles's.

We have taken the more pains to describe this person, for two remarkable reasons; the one is, that this unlovely creature was taken in the fact with a very pretty young fellow; the other, which is more productive of moral lesson, is, that however wretched her fortune may appear to the reader, she was one of the merriest persons in the whole prison.

Blear-eyed Moll then came up to Mr. Booth with a smile, or rather grin, on her countenance, and asked him for a dram of gin; and when Booth as-



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sured her that he had not a penny of money, she replied — "D—n your eyes, I thought by your look you had been a clever fellow, and upon the snaffling lay[1] at least; but, d—n your body and eyes, I find you are some sneaking budge[2] rascal." She then launched forth a volley of dreadful oaths, interlarded with some language not proper to be repeated here, and was going to lay hold on poor Booth, when a tall prisoner, who had been very earnestly eying Booth for some time, came up, and, taking her by the shoulder, flung her off at some distance, cursing her for a b—h, and bidding her let the gentleman alone.

This person was not himself of the most inviting aspect. He was long-visaged, and pale, with a red beard of above a fortnight's growth. He was attired in a brownish-black coat, which would have shewed more holes than it did, had not the linen, which appeared through it, been entirely of the same colour with the cloth.

This gentleman, whose name was Robinson, addressed himself very civilly to Mr. Booth, and told him he was sorry to see one of his appearance in that place: "For as to your being without your coat, sir," says he, "I can easily account for that; and, indeed, dress is the least part which distinguishes a gentleman." At which words he cast a significant look on his own coat, as if he desired they should be applied to himself. He then proceeded in the following manner:

[1] A cant term for robbery on the highway.
[2] Another cant term for pilfering.



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"I perceive, sir, you are but just arrived in this dismal place, which is, indeed, rendered more detestable by the wretches who inhabit it than by any other circumstance; but even these a wise man will soon bring himself to bear with indifference; for what is, is; and what must be, must be. The knowledge of this, which, simple as it appears, is in truth the heighth of all philosophy, renders a wise man superior to every evil which can befal him. I hope, sir, no very dreadful accident is the cause of your coming hither; but, whatever it was, you may be assured it could not be otherwise; for all things happen by an inevitable fatality; and a man can no more resist the impulse of fate than a wheelbarrow can the force of its driver."

Besides the obligation which Mr. Robinson had conferred on Mr. Booth in delivering him from the insults of Blear-eyed Moll, there was something in the manner of Robinson which, notwithstanding the meanness of his dress, seemed to distinguish him from the crowd of wretches who swarmed in those regions; and, above all, the sentiments which he had just declared very nearly coincided with those of Mr. Booth: this gentleman was what they call a freethinker; that is to say, a deist, or, perhaps, an atheist; for, though he did not absolutely deny the existence of a God, yet he entirely denied his providence. A doctrine which, if it is not downright atheism, hath a direct tendency towards it; and, as Dr. Clarke observes, may soon be driven into it. And as to Mr. Booth, though he was in his heart an extreme well-wisher to religion (for he was



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an honest man), yet his notions of it were very slight and uncertain. To say truth, he was in the wavering condition so finely described by Claudian:

*labefacta cadebat*
*Religio, causasque viam* non sponte *sequebar*
*Alterius; vacuo quæ currere semina motu*
*Affirmat; magnumque novas per inane figuras*
*Fortuna, non arte, regi; quæ numina sensu*
*Ambiguo, vel nulla putat, vel nescia nostri.*

This way of thinking, or rather of doubting, he had contracted from the same reasons which Claudian assigns, and which had induced Brutus in his latter days to doubt the existence of that virtue which he had all his life cultivated. In short, poor Booth imagined that a larger share of misfortunes had fallen to his lot than he had merited; and this led him, who (though a good classical scholar) was not deeply learned in religious matters, into a disadvantageous opinion of Providence. A dangerous way of reasoning, in which our conclusions are not only too hasty, from an imperfect view of things, but we are likewise liable to much error from partiality to ourselves; viewing our virtues and vices as through a perspective, in which we turn the glass always to our own advantage, so as to diminish the one, and as greatly to magnify the other.

From the above reasons, it can be no wonder that Mr. Booth did not decline the acquaintance of this person, in a place which could not promise to afford him any better. He answered him, therefore, with great courtesy, as indeed he was of a very good and gentle disposition, and, after expressing a civil sur-



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prize at meeting him there, declared himself to be of the same opinion with regard to the necessity of human actions; adding, however, that he did not believe men were under any blind impulse or direction of fate, but that every man acted merely from the force of that passion which was uppermost in his mind, and could do no otherwise.

A discourse now ensued between the two gentlemen on the necessity arising from the impulse of fate, and the necessity arising from the impulse of passion, which, as it will make a pretty pamphlet of itself, we shall reserve for some future opportunity. When this was ended they set forward to survey the gaol and the prisoners, with the several cases of whom Mr. Robinson, who had been some time under confinement, undertook to make Mr. Booth acquainted.



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## CHAPTER FOUR

DISCLOSING FURTHER SECRETS OF THE PRISON-HOUSE.

THE first persons whom they passed by were three men in fetters, who were enjoying themselves very merrily over a bottle of wine and a pipe of tobacco. These, Mr. Robinson informed his friend, were three street-robbers, and were all certain of being hanged the ensuing sessions. So inconsiderable an object, said he, is misery to light minds, when it is at any distance.

A little farther they beheld a man prostrate on the ground, whose heavy groans and frantic actions plainly indicated the highest disorder of mind. This person was, it seems, committed for a small felony; and his wife, who then lay-in, upon hearing the news, had thrown herself from a window two pair of stairs high, by which means he had, in all probability, lost both her and his child.

A very pretty girl then advanced towards them, whose beauty Mr. Booth could not help admiring the moment he saw her; declaring, at the same time, he thought she had great innocence in her countenance. Robinson said she was committed thither as an idle and disorderly person, and a common street-walker. As she past by Mr. Booth, she damned his eyes, and



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discharged a volley of words, every one of which was too indecent to be repeated.

They now beheld a little creature sitting by herself in a corner, and crying bitterly. This girl, Mr. Robinson said, was committed because her father-in-law, who was in the grenadier guards, had sworn that he was afraid of his life, or of some bodily harm which she would do him, and she could get no sureties for keeping the peace; for which reason Justice Thrasher had committed her to prison.

A great noise now arose, occasioned by the prisoners all flocking to see a fellow whipt for petty larceny, to which he was condemned by the court of quarter-sessions; but this soon ended in the disappointment of the spectators; for the fellow, after being stript, having advanced another sixpence, was discharged untouched.

This was immediately followed by another bustle; Blear-eyed Moll, and several of her companions, having got possession of a man who was committed for certain odious unmanlike practices, not fit to be named, were giving him various kinds of discipline, and would probably have put an end to him, had he not been rescued out of their hands by authority.

When this bustle was a little allayed, Mr. Booth took notice of a young woman in rags sitting on the ground, and supporting the head of an old man in her lap, who appeared to be giving up the ghost. These, Mr. Robinson informed him, were father and daughter; that the latter was committed for stealing a loaf, in order to support the former, and the former for receiving it, knowing it to be stolen.



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A well-drest man then walked surlily by them, whom Mr. Robinson reported to have been committed on an indictment found against him for a most horrid perjury; but, says he, we expect him to be bailed to-day. "Good Heaven!" cries Booth, "can such villains find bail, and is no person charitable enough to bail that poor father and daughter?" "Oh! sir," answered Robinson, "the offence of the daughter, being felony, is held not to be bailable in law; whereas perjury is a misdemeanour only; and therefore persons who are even indicted for it are, nevertheless, capable of being bailed. Nay, of all perjuries, that of which this man is indicted is the worst; for it was with an intention of taking away the life of an innocent person by form of law. As to perjuries in civil matters, they are not so very criminal." "They are not," said Booth; "and yet even these are a most flagitious offence, and worthy the highest punishment." "Surely they ought to be distinguished," answered Robinson, "from the others: for what is taking away a little property from a man, compared to taking away his life and his reputation, and ruining his family into the bargain?—I hope there can be no comparison in the crimes, and I think there ought to be none in the punishment. However, at present, the punishment of all perjury is only pillory and transportation for seven years; and, as it is a traversable and bailable offence, methods are found to escape any punishment at all."[1]

[1] By removing the indictment by *certiorari* into the King's Bench, the trial is so long postponed, and the costs are so



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Booth exprest great astonishment at this, when his attention was suddenly diverted by the most miserable object that he had yet seen. This was a wretch almost naked, and who bore in his countenance, joined to an appearance of honesty, the marks of poverty, hunger, and disease. He had, moreover, a wooden leg, and two or three scars on his forehead. "The case of this poor man is, indeed, unhappy enough," said Robinson. "He hath served his country, lost his limb, and received several wounds at the siege of Gibraltar. When he was discharged from the hospital abroad he came over to get into that of Chelsea, but could not immediately, as none of his officers were then in England. In the mean time, he was one day apprehended and committed hither on suspicion of stealing three herrings from a fishmonger. He was tried several months ago for this offence, and acquitted; indeed, his innocence manifestly appeared at the trial; but he was brought back again for his fees, and here he hath lain ever since."

Booth exprest great horror at this account, and declared, if he had only so much money in his pocket, he would pay his fees for him; but added that he was not possessed of a single farthing in the world.

Robinson hesitated a moment, and then said, with a smile, "I am going to make you, sir, a very odd proposal after your last declaration; but what say you to a game at cards? it will serve to pass a tedious hour, and may divert your thoughts from more unpleasant speculations."

highly encreased, that prosecutors are often tired out, and some incapacitated from pursuing. *Verbum sapienti.*



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I do not imagine Booth would have agreed to this; for, though some love of gaming had been formerly amongst his faults, yet he was not so egregiously addicted to that vice as to be tempted by the shabby plight of Robinson, who had, if I may so express myself, no charms for a gamester. If he had, however, any such inclinations, he had no opportunity to follow them, for, before he could make any answer to Robinson's proposal, a strapping wench came up to Booth, and, taking hold of his arm, asked him to walk aside with her; saying, "What a pox, are you such a fresh cull that you do not know this fellow? why, he is a gambler, and committed for cheating at play. There is not such a pickpocket in the whole quad."[1]

A scene of altercation now ensued between Robinson and the lady, which ended in a bout at fisticuffs, in which the lady was greatly superior to the philosopher.

While the two combatants were engaged, a grave-looking man, rather better drest than the majority of the company, came up to Mr. Booth, and, taking him aside, said, "I am sorry, sir, to see a gentleman, as you appear to be, in such intimacy with that rascal, who makes no scruple of disowning all revealed religion. As for crimes, they are human errors, and signify but little; nay, perhaps the worse a man is by nature, the more room there is for grace. The spirit is active, and loves best to inhabit those minds where it may meet with the most work. Whatever your crime be, therefore I would not have you de-

[1] A cant word for a prison.



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spair, but rather rejoice at it; for perhaps it may be the means of your being called." He ran on for a considerable time with this cant, without waiting for an answer, and ended in declaring himself a methodist.

Just as the methodist had finished his discourse, a beautiful young woman was ushered into the gaol. She was genteel and well drest, and did not in the least resemble those females whom Mr. Booth had hitherto seen. The constable had no sooner delivered her at the gate than she asked with a commanding voice for the keeper; and, when he arrived, she said to him, "Well, sir, whither am I to be conducted? I hope I am not to take up my lodging with these creatures." The keeper answered, with a kind of surly respect, "Madam, we have rooms for those who can afford to pay for them." At these words she pulled a handsome purse from her pocket, in which many guineas chinked, saying, with an air of indignation, "That she was not come hither on account of poverty." The keeper no sooner viewed the purse than his features became all softened in an instant; and, with all the courtesy of which he was master, he desired the lady to walk with him, assuring her that she should have the best apartment in his house.

Mr. Booth was now left alone; for the methodist had forsaken him, having, as the phrase of the sect is, searched him to the bottom. In fact, he had thoroughly examined every one of Mr. Booth's pockets; from which he had conveyed away a penknife and an iron snuff-box, these being all the moveables which were to be found.



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Booth was standing near the gate of the prison when the young lady above mentioned was introduced into the yard. He viewed her features very attentively, and was persuaded that he knew her. She was indeed so remarkably handsome, that it was hardly possible for any who had ever seen her to forget her. He enquired of one of the underkeepers if the name of the prisoner lately arrived was not Matthews; to which he was answered that her name was not Matthews but Vincent, and that she was committed for murder.

The latter part of this information made Mr. Booth suspect his memory more than the former; for it was very possible that she might have changed her name; but he hardly thought she could so far have changed her nature as to be guilty of a crime so very incongruous with her former gentle manners: for Miss Matthews had both the birth and education of a gentlewoman. He concluded, therefore, that he was certainly mistaken, and rested satisfied without any further enquiry.



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## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONTAINING CERTAIN ADVENTURES WHICH BEFEL MR. BOOTH IN THE PRISON.

THE remainder of the day Mr. Booth spent in melancholy contemplation on his present condition. He was destitute of the common necessaries of life, and consequently unable to subsist where he was; nor was there a single person in town to whom he could, with any reasonable hope, apply for his delivery. Grief for some time banished the thoughts of food from his mind; but in the morning nature began to grow uneasy for want of her usual nourishment: for he had not eat a morsel during the last forty hours. A penny loaf, which is, it seems, the ordinary allowance to the prisoners in Bridewell, was now delivered him; and while he was eating this a man brought him a little packet sealed up, informing him that it came by a messenger, who said it required no answer.

Mr. Booth now opened his packet, and, after unfolding several pieces of blank paper successively, at last discovered a guinea, wrapt with great care in the inmost paper. He was vastly surprized at this sight, as he had few if any friends from whom he could expect such a favour, slight as it was; and not one of his friends, as he was apprized, knew of his con-



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finement. As there was no direction to the packet, nor a word of writing contained in it, he began to suspect that it was delivered to the wrong person; and being one of the most untainted honesty, he found out the man who gave it him, and again examined him concerning the person who brought it, and the message delivered with it. The man assured Booth that he had made no mistake; saying, "If your name is Booth, sir, I am positive you are the gentleman to whom the parcel I gave you belongs."

The most scrupulous honesty would, perhaps, in such a situation, have been well enough satisfied in finding no owner for the guinea; especially when proclamation had been made in the prison that Mr. Booth had received a packet without any direction, to which, if any person had any claim, and would discover the contents, he was ready to deliver it to such claimant. No such claimant being found (I mean none who knew the contents; for many swore that they expected just such a packet, and believed it to be their property), Mr. Booth very calmly resolved to apply the money to his own use.

The first thing after redemption of the coat, which Mr. Booth, hungry as he was, thought of, was to supply himself with snuff, which he had long, to his great sorrow, been without. On this occasion he presently missed that iron box which the methodist had so dexterously conveyed out of his pocket, as we mentioned in the last chapter.

He no sooner missed this box than he immediately suspected that the gambler was the person who had stolen it; nay, so well was he assured of this man's



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guilt, that it may, perhaps, be improper to say he barely suspected it. Though Mr. Booth was, as we have hinted, a man of a very sweet disposition, yet was he rather overwarm. Having, therefore, no doubt concerning the person of the thief, he eagerly sought him out, and very bluntly charged him with the fact.

The gambler, whom I think we should now call the philosopher, received this charge without the least visible emotion either of mind or muscle. After a short pause of a few moments, he answered, with great solemnity, as follows: "Young man, I am entirely unconcerned at your groundless suspicion. He that censures a stranger, as I am to you, without any cause, makes a worse compliment to himself than to the stranger. You know yourself, friend; you know not me. It is true, indeed, you heard me accused of being a cheat and a gamester; but who is my accuser? Look at my apparel, friend; do thieves and gamesters wear such cloaths as these? play is my folly, not my vice; it is my impulse, and I have been a martyr to it. Would a gamester have asked another to play when he could have lost eighteen-pence and won nothing? However, if you are not satisfied, you may search my pockets; the outside of all but one will serve your turn, and in that one there is the eighteen-pence I told you of." He then turned up his cloaths; and his pockets entirely resembled the pitchers of the Belides.

Booth was a little staggered at this defence. He said the real value of the iron box was too inconsiderable to mention; but that he had a capricious value for it, for the sake of the person who gave it



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him; "for, though it is not," said he, "worth sixpence, I would willingly give a crown to any one who would bring it me again."

Robinson answered, "If that be the case, you have nothing more to do but to signify your intention in the prison, and I am well convinced you will not be long without regaining the possession of your snuff-box."

This advice was immediately followed, and with success, the methodist presently producing the box, which, he said, he had found, and should have returned it before, had he known the person to whom it belonged; adding, with uplifted eyes, that the spirit would not suffer him knowingly to detain the goods of another, however inconsiderable the value was. "Why so, friend?" said Robinson. "Have I not heard you often say, the wickeder any man was the better, provided he was what you call a believer?" "You mistake me," cries Cooper (for that was the name of the methodist): "no man can be wicked after he is possessed by the spirit. There is a wide difference between the days of sin and the days of grace. I have been a sinner myself." "I believe thee," cries Robinson, with a sneer. "I care not," answered the other, "what an atheist believes. I suppose you would insinuate that I stole the snuff-box; but I value not your malice; the Lord knows my innocence." He then walked off with the reward; and Booth, turning to Robinson, very earnestly asked pardon for his groundless suspicion; which the other, without any hesitation accorded him, saying, "You never accused me, sir; you sus-



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pected some gambler, with whose character I have no concern. I should be angry with a friend or acquaintance who should give a hasty credit to any allegation against me; but I have no reason to be offended with you for believing what the woman, and the rascal who is just gone, and who is committed here for a pickpocket, which you did not perhaps know, told you to my disadvantage. And if you thought me to be a gambler you had just reason to suspect any ill of me; for I myself am confined here by the perjury of one of those villains, who, having cheated me of my money at play, and hearing that I intended to apply to a magistrate against him, himself began the attack, and obtained a warrant against me of Justice Thrasher, who, without hearing one speech in my defence, committed me to this place."

Booth testified great compassion at this account; and, he having invited Robinson to dinner, they spent that day together. In the afternoon Booth indulged his friend with a game at cards; at first for halfpence and afterwards for shillings, when fortune so favoured Robinson that he did not leave the other a single shilling in his pocket.

A surprizing run of luck in a gamester is often mistaken for somewhat else by persons who are not over-zealous believers in the divinity of fortune. I have known a stranger at Bath, who hath happened fortunately (I might almost say unfortunately) to have four by honours in his hand almost every time he dealt for a whole evening, shunned universally by the whole company the next day. And certain it is, that Mr. Booth, though of a temper very little



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inclined to suspicion, began to waver in his opinion whether the character given by Mr. Robinson of himself, or that which the others gave of him, was the truer.

In the morning hunger paid him a second visit, and found him again in the same situation as before. After some deliberation, therefore, he resolved to ask Robinson to lend him a shilling or two of that money which was lately his own. And this experiment, he thought, would confirm him either in a good or evil opinion of that gentleman.

To this demand Robinson answered, with great alacrity, that he should very gladly have complied, had not fortune played one of her jade tricks with him: "for since my winning of you," said he, "I have been stript not only of your money but my own." He was going to harangue farther; but Booth, with great indignation, turned from him.

This poor gentleman had very little time to reflect on his own misery, or the rascality, as it appeared to him, of the other, when the same person who had the day before delivered him the guinea from the unknown hand, again accosted him, and told him a lady in the house (so he expressed himself) desired the favour of his company.

Mr. Booth immediately obeyed the message, and was conducted into a room in the prison, where he was presently convinced that Mrs. Vincent was no other than his old acquaintance Miss Matthews.



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## CHAPTER SIX

CONTAINING THE EXTRAORDINARY BEHAVIOUR OF MISS MATTHEWS ON HER MEETING WITH BOOTH, AND SOME ENDEAVOURS TO PROVE, BY REASON AND AUTHORITY, THAT IT IS POSSIBLE FOR A WOMAN TO APPEAR TO BE WHAT SHE REALLY IS NOT.

EIGHT or nine years had past since any interview between Mr. Booth and Miss Matthews; and their meeting now in so extraordinary a place affected both of them with an equal surprize.

After some immaterial ceremonies, the lady acquainted Mr. Booth that, having heard there was a person in the prison who knew her by the name of Matthews, she had great curiosity to inquire who he was, whereupon he had been shewn to her from the window of the house; that she immediately recollected him, and, being informed of his distressful situation, for which she expressed great concern, she had sent him that guinea which he had received the day before; and then proceeded to excuse herself for not having desired to see him at that time, when she was under the greatest disorder and hurry of spirits.

Booth made many handsome acknowledgments of her favour; and added that he very little wondered at the disorder of her spirits, concluding that he was



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heartily concerned at seeing her there; "but I hope madam," said he —

Here he hesitated; upon which, bursting into an agony of tears, she cried out, "O captain! captain! many extraordinary things have passed since last I saw you. O gracious heaven! did I ever expect that this would be the next place of our meeting?"

She then flung herself into her chair, where she gave a loose to her passion, whilst he, in the most affectionate and tender manner, endeavoured to soothe and comfort her; but passion itself did probably more for its own relief than all his friendly consolations. Having vented this in a large flood of tears, she became pretty well composed; but Booth unhappily mentioning her father, she again relapsed into an agony, and cried out, "Why? why will you repeat the name of that dear man? I have disgraced him, Mr. Booth, I am unworthy the name of his daughter." — Here passion again stopped her words, and discharged itself in tears.

After this second vent of sorrow or shame, or, if the reader pleases, of rage, she once more recovered from her agonies. To say the truth, these are, I believe, as critical discharges of nature as any of those which are so called by the physicians, and do more effectually relieve the mind than any remedies with which the whole materia medica of philosophy can supply it.

When Mrs. Vincent had recovered her faculties, she perceived Booth standing silent, with a mixture of concern and astonishment in his countenance; then addressing herself to him with an air of most



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bewitching softness, of which she was a perfect mistress, she said, "I do not wonder at your amazement, Captain Booth, nor indeed at the concern which you so plainly discover for me; for I well know the goodness of your nature: but, O, Mr. Booth! believe me, when you know what hath happened since our last meeting, your concern will be raised, however your astonishment may cease. O, sir! you are a stranger to the cause of my sorrows."

"I hope I am, madam," answered he; "for I cannot believe what I have heard in the prison — surely murder" — at which words she started from her chair, repeating, "Murder! oh! it is music in my ears! — You have heard then the cause of my commitment, my glory, my delight, my reparation! Yes, my old friend, this is the hand, this is the arm that drove the penknife to his heart. Unkind fortune, that not one drop of his blood reached my hand. — Indeed, sir, I would never have washed it from it. — But, though I have not the happiness to see it on my hand, I have the glorious satisfaction of remembering I saw it run in rivers on the floor; I saw it forsake his cheeks, I saw him fall a martyr to my revenge. And is the killing a villain to be called murder? perhaps the law calls it so. — Let it call it what it will, or punish me as it pleases. —— Punish me! — no, no — that is not in the power of man — not of that monster man, Mr. Booth. I am undone, am revenged, and have now no more business for life; let them take it from me when they will."

Our poor gentleman turned pale with horror at this speech, and the ejaculation of "Good heavens!



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what do I hear?" burst spontaneously from his lips; nor can we wonder at this, though he was the bravest of men; for her voice, her looks, her gestures, were properly adapted to the sentiments she exprest. Such indeed was her image, that neither could Shakspear describe, nor Hogarth paint, nor Clive act, a fury in higher perfection.

"What do you hear?" reiterated she. "You hear the resentment of the most injured of women. You have heard, you say, of the murder; but do you know the cause, Mr. Booth? Have you since your return to England visited that country where we formerly knew one another? tell me, do you know my wretched story? tell me that, my friend."

Booth hesitated for an answer; indeed, he had heard some imperfect stories, not much to her advantage. She waited not till he had formed a speech; but cried, "Whatever you may have heard, you cannot be acquainted with all the strange accidents which have occasioned your seeing me in a place which at our last parting was so unlikely that I should ever have been found in; nor can you know the cause of all that I have uttered, and which, I am convinced, you never expected to have heard from my mouth. If these circumstances raise your curiosity, I will satisfy it."

He answered, that curiosity was too mean a word to express his ardent desire of knowing her story. Upon which, with very little previous ceremony, she began to relate what is written in the following chapter.

But before we put an end to this it may be neces-



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sary to whisper a word or two to the critics, who have, perhaps, begun to express no less astonishment than Mr. Booth, that a lady in whom we had remarked a most extraordinary power of displaying softness should, the very next moment after the words were out of her mouth, express sentiments becoming the lips of a Dalila, Jezebel, Medea, Semiramis, Parysatis, Tanaquil, Livilla, Messalina, Agrippina Brunichilde, Elfrida, Lady Macbeth, Joan of Naples, Christina of Sweden, Katharine Hays, Sarah Malcolm, Con Philips,[1] or any other heroine of the tender sex, which history, sacred or profane, antient or modern, false or true, hath recorded.

We desire such critics to remember that it is the same English climate, in which, on the lovely 10th of June, under a serene sky, the amorous Jacobite, kissing the odoriferous zephyr's breath, gathers a nosegay of white roses to deck the whiter breast of Celia; and in which, on the 11th of June, the very next day, the boisterous Boreas, roused by the hollow thunder, rushes horrible through the air, and, driving the wet tempest before him, levels the hope of the husbandman with the earth, dreadful remembrance of the consequences of the Revolution.

Again, let it be remembered that this is the self-same Celia, all tender, soft, and delicate, who with a voice, the sweetness of which the Syrens might envy, warbles the harmonious song in praise of the young adventurer; and again, the next day, or, perhaps the next hour, with fiery eyes, wrinkled brows, and foaming lips, roars forth treason and nonsense in a

[1] Though last not least.



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political argument with some fair one of a different principle.

Or, if the critic be a Whig, and consequently dislikes such kind of similes, as being too favourable to Jacobitism, let him be contented with the following story:

I happened in my youth to sit behind two ladies in a side-box at a play, where, in the balcony on the opposite side, was placed the inimitable B——y C——s, in company with a young fellow of no very formal, or indeed sober, appearance. One of the ladies, I remember, said to the other — "Did you ever see anything look so modest and so innocent as that girl over the way? what pity it is such a creature should be in the way of ruin, as I am afraid she is, by her being alone with that young fellow!" Now this lady was no bad physiognomist, for it was impossible to conceive a greater appearance of modesty, innocence, and simplicity, than what nature had displayed in the countenance of that girl; and yet, all appearances notwithstanding, I myself (remember, critic, it was in my youth) had a few mornings before seen that very identical picture of all those engaging qualities in bed with a rake at a bagnio, smoaking tobacco, drinking punch, talking obscenity, and swearing and cursing with all the impudence and impiety of the lowest and most abandoned trull of a soldier.



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## CHAPTER SEVEN

IN WHICH MISS MATTHEWS BEGINS HER HISTORY.

MISS MATTHEWS, having barred the door on the inside as securely as it was before barred on the outside, proceeded as follows:

"You may imagine I am going to begin my history at the time when you left the country; but I cannot help reminding you of something which happened before. You will soon recollect the incident; but I believe you little know the consequence either at that time or since. Alas! I could keep a secret then! now I have no secrets; the world knows all; and it is not worth my while to conceal anything. Well! — You will not wonder, I believe. — I protest I can hardly tell it you, even now. —— But I am convinced you have too good an opinion of yourself to be surprized at any conquest you may have made. —— Few men want that good opinion — and perhaps very few had ever more reason for it. Indeed, Will, you was a charming fellow in those days; nay, you are not much altered for the worse now, at least in the opinion of some women; for your complexion and features are grown much more masculine than they were." Here Booth made her a low bow, most probably with a compliment; and



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after a little hesitation she again proceeded.——"Do you remember a contest which happened at an assembly, betwixt myself and Miss Johnson, about standing uppermost? you was then my partner; and young Williams danced with the other lady. The particulars are not now worth mentioning, though I suppose you have long since forgot them. Let it suffice that you supported my claim, and Williams very sneakingly gave up that of his partner, who was, with much difficulty, afterwards prevailed to dance with him. You said — I am sure I repeat the words exactly — that you would not for the world affront any lady there; but that you thought you might, without any such danger declare, that there was no assembly in which that lady, meaning your humble servant, was not worthy of the uppermost place; 'nor will I,' said you, 'suffer the first duke in England, when she is at the uppermost end of the room, and hath called her dance, to lead his partner above her.'

"What made this the more pleasing to me was, that I secretly hated Miss Johnson. Will you have the reason? why, then, I will tell you honestly, she was my rival. That word perhaps astonishes you, as you never, I believe, heard of any one who made his addresses to me; and indeed my heart was, till that night, entirely indifferent to all mankind: I mean, then, that she was my rival for praise, for beauty, for dress, for fortune, and consequently for admiration. My triumph on this conquest is not to be expressed any more than my delight in the person to whom I chiefly owed it. The former, I fancy, was visible to the whole company; and I desired it should be so;



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but the latter was so well concealed, that no one, I am confident, took any notice of it. And yet you appeared to me that night to be an angel. You looked, you danced, you spoke — everything charmed me."

"Good Heavens!" cries Booth, "is it possible you should do me so much unmerited honour, and I should be dunce enough not to perceive the least symptom?"

"I assure you," answered she, "I did all I could to prevent you; and yet I almost hated you for not seeing through what I strove to hide. Why, Mr. Booth, was you not more quick-sighted? — I will answer for you — your affections were more happily disposed of to a much better woman than myself, whom you married soon afterwards. I should ask you for her, Mr. Booth; I should have asked you for her before; but I am unworthy of asking for her, or of calling her my acquaintance."

Booth stopt her short, as she was running into another fit of passion, and begged her to omit all former matters, and acquaint him with that part of her history to which he was an entire stranger.

She then renewed her discourse as follows: "You know, Mr. Booth, I soon afterwards left that town, upon the death of my grandmother, and returned home to my father's house; where I had not been long arrived before some troops of dragoons came to quarter in our neighbourhood. Among the officers there was a cornet whose detested name was Hebbers, a name I could scarce repeat, had I not at the same time the pleasure to reflect that he is now no



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more. My father, you know, who is a hearty well-wisher to the present government, used always to invite the officers to his house; so did he these. Nor was it long before this cornet in so particular a manner recommended himself to the poor old gentleman (I cannot think of him without tears), that our house became his principal habitation, and he was rarely at his quarters, unless when his superior officers obliged him to be there. I shall say nothing of his person, nor could that be any recommendation to a man; it was such, however, as no woman could have made an objection to. Nature had certainly wrapt up her odious work in a most beautiful covering. To say the truth, he was the handsomest man, except one only, that I ever saw — I assure you, I have seen a handsomer —— but — well. — He had, besides, all the qualifications of a gentleman; was genteel and extremely polite; spoke French well, and danced to a miracle; but what chiefly recommended him to my father was his skill in music, of which you know that dear man was the most violent lover. I wish he was not too susceptible of flattery on that head; for I have heard Hebbers often greatly commend my father's performance, and have observed that the good man was wonderfully pleased with such commendations. To say the truth, it is the only way I can account for the extraordinary friendship which my father conceived for this person; such a friendship, that he at last became a part of our family.

"This very circumstance, which, as I am convinced, strongly recommended him to my father,



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had the very contrary effect with me: I had never any delight in music, and it was not without much difficulty I was prevailed on to learn to play on the harpsichord, in which I had made a very slender progress. As this man, therefore, was frequently the occasion of my being importuned to play against my will, I began to entertain some dislike for him on that account; and as to his person, I assure you, I long continued to look on it with great indifference.

"How strange will the art of this man appear to you presently, who had sufficient address to convert that very circumstance which had at first occasioned my dislike into the first seeds of affection for him!

"You have often, I believe, heard my sister Betty play on the harpsichord; she was, indeed, reputed the best performer in the whole country.

"I was the farthest in the world from regarding this perfection of hers with envy. In reality, perhaps, I despised all perfection of this kind: at least, as I had neither skill nor ambition to excel this way, I looked upon it as a matter of mere indifference.

"Hebbers first put this emulation in my head. He took great pains to persuade me that I had much greater abilities of the musical kind than my sister, and that I might with the greatest ease, if I pleased, excel her; offering me, at the same time, his assistance if I would resolve to undertake it.

"When he had sufficiently inflamed my ambition, in which, perhaps, he found too little difficulty, the continual praises of my sister, which before I had disregarded, became more and more nauseous in my



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ears; and the rather, as, music being the favourite passion of my father, I became apprehensive (not without frequent hints from Hebbers of that nature) that she might gain too great a preference in his favour.

"To my harpsichord then I applied myself night and day, with such industry and attention, that I soon began to perform in a tolerable manner. I do not absolutely say I excelled my sister, for many were of a different opinion; but, indeed, there might be some partiality in all that.

"Hebbers, at least, declared himself on my side, and nobody could doubt his judgment. He asserted openly that I played in the better manner of the two; and one day, when I was playing to him alone, he affected to burst into a rapture of admiration, and, squeezing me gently by the hand, said, There, madam, I now declare you excel your sister as much in music as, added he in a whispering sigh, you do her, and all the world, in every other charm.

"No woman can bear any superiority in whatever thing she desires to excel in. I now began to hate all the admirers of my sister, to be uneasy at every commendation bestowed on her skill in music, and consequently to love Hebbers for the preference which he gave to mine.

"It was now that I began to survey the handsome person of Hebbers with pleasure. And here, Mr. Booth, I will betray to you the grand secret of our sex. —— Many women, I believe, do, with great innocence, and even with great indifference, converse with men of the finest persons; but this I am confi-



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dent may be affirmed with truth, that, when once a woman comes to ask this question of herself, Is the man whom I like for some other reason, handsome? her fate and his too, very strongly depend on her answering in the affirmative.

"Hebbers no sooner perceived that he had made an impression on my heart, of which I am satisfied I gave him too undeniable tokens, than he affected on a sudden to shun me in the most apparent manner. He wore the most melancholy air in my presence, and, by his dejected looks and sighs, firmly persuaded me that there was some secret sorrow labouring in his bosom; nor will it be difficult for you to imagine to what cause I imputed it.

"Whilst I was wishing for his declaration of a passion in which I thought I could not be mistaken, and at the same time trembling whenever we met with the apprehension of this very declaration, the widow Carey came from London to make us a visit, intending to stay the whole summer at our house.

"Those who know Mrs. Carey will scarce think I do her an injury in saying she is far from being handsome; and yet she is as finished a coquette as if she had the highest beauty to support that character. But perhaps you have seen her; and if you have I am convinced you will readily subscribe to my opinion."

Booth answered he had not; and then she proceeded as in the following chapter.



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## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE HISTORY OF MISS MATTHEWS CONTINUED.

THIS young lady had not been three days with us before Hebbers grew so particular with her, that it was generally observed; and my poor father, who, I believe, loved the cornet as if he had been his son, began to jest on the occasion, as one who would not be displeased at throwing a good jointure into the arms of his friend.

"You will easily guess, sir, the disposition of my mind on this occasion; but I was not permitted to suffer long under it; for one day, when Hebbers was alone with me, he took an opportunity of expressing his abhorrence at the thoughts of marrying for interest, contrary to his inclinations. I was warm on the subject, and, I believe, went so far as to say that none but fools and villains did so. He replied, with a sigh, Yes, madam, but what would you think of a man whose heart is all the while bleeding for another woman, to whom he would willingly sacrifice the world; but, because he must sacrifice her interest as well as his own, never durst even give her a hint of that passion which was preying on his very vitals? 'Do you believe, Miss Fanny, there is such a wretch on earth?' I answered, with an assumed coldness, I



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did not believe there was. He then took me gently by the hand, and, with a look so tender that I cannot describe it, vowed he was himself that wretch. Then starting, as if conscious of an error committed, he cried with a faltering voice, 'What am I saying? Pardon me, Miss Fanny; since I beg only your pity, I never will ask for more. —' At these words, hearing my father coming up, I betrayed myself entirely, if, indeed, I had not done it before. I hastily withdrew my hand, crying, Hush! for heaven's sake, my father is just coming in; my blushes, my look, and my accent, telling him, I suppose, all which he wished to know.

"A few days now brought matters to an eclaircissement between us; the being undeceived in what had given me so much uneasiness gave me a pleasure too sweet to be resisted. To triumph over the widow, for whom I had in a very short time contracted a most inveterate hatred, was a pride not to be described. Hebbers appeared to me to be the cause of all this happiness. I doubted not but that he had the most disinterested passion for me, and thought him every way worthy of its return. I did return it, and accepted him as my lover.

"He declared the greatest apprehensions of my father's suspicion, though I am convinced these were causeless had his designs been honourable. To blind these, I consented that he should carry on sham addresses to the widow, who was now a constant jest between us; and he pretended from time to time to acquaint me faithfully with everything that past at his interviews with her; nor was this faithless



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woman wanting in her part of the deceit. She carried herself to me all the while with a shew of affection, and pretended to have the utmost friendship for me. But such are the friendships of women!"

At this remark, Booth, though enough affected at some parts of the story, had great difficulty to refrain from laughter; but, by good luck, he escaped being perceived; and the lady went on without interruption.

"I am come now to a part of my narrative in which it is impossible to be particular without being tedious; for, as to the commerce between lovers, it is, I believe, much the same in all cases; and there is, perhaps, scarce a single phrase that hath not been repeated ten millions of times.

"One thing, however, as I strongly remarked it then, so I will repeat it to you now. In all our conversations, in moments when he fell into the warmest raptures, and exprest the greatest uneasiness at the delay of his joys, he seldom mentioned the word marriage; and never once solicited a day for that purpose. Indeed, women cannot be cautioned too much against such lovers; for though I have heard, and perhaps truly, of some of our sex, of a virtue so exalted, that it is proof against every temptation; yet the generality, I am afraid, are too much in the power of a man to whom they have owned an affection. What is called being upon a good footing is, perhaps, being upon a very dangerous one; and a woman who hath given her consent to marry can hardly be said to be safe till she is married.

"And now, sir, I hasten to the period of my ruin. We had a wedding in our family; my musical sister



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was married to a young fellow as musical as herself. Such a match, you may be sure, amongst other festivities, must have a ball. Oh! Mr. Booth, shall modesty forbid me to remark to you what past on that occasion? But why do I mention modesty, who have no pretensions to it? Everything was said and practised on that occasion, as if the purpose had been to inflame the mind of every woman present. That effect, I freely own to you, it had with me. Music, dancing, wine, and the most luscious conversation, in which my poor dear father innocently joined, raised ideas in me of which I shall for ever repent; and I wished (why should I deny it?) that it had been my wedding instead of my sister's.

"The villain Hebbers danced with me that night, and he lost no opportunity of improving the occasion. In short, the dreadful evening came. My father, though it was a very unusual thing with him, grew intoxicated with liquor; most of the men were in the same condition; nay, I myself drank more than I was accustomed to, enough to inflame, though not to disorder. I lost my former bed-fellow, my sister, and — you may, I think, guess the rest — the villain found means to steal to my chamber, and I was undone.

"Two months I passed in this detested commerce, buying, even then, my guilty, half-tasted pleasures at too dear a rate, with continual horror and apprehension; but what have I paid since — what do I pay now, Mr. Booth? O may my fate be a warning to every woman to keep her innocence, to resist every temptation, since she is certain to repent of the foolish bargain. May it be a warning to her to deal



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with mankind with care and caution; to shun the least approaches of dishonour, and never to confide too much in the honesty of a man, nor in her own strength, where she has so much at stake; let her remember she walks on a precipice, and the bottomless pit is to receive her if she slips; nay, if she makes but one false step.

"I ask your pardon, Mr. Booth; I might have spared these exhortations, since no woman hears me; but you will not wonder at seeing me affected on this occasion."

Booth declared he was much more surprised at her being able so well to preserve her temper in recounting her story.

"O sir," answered she, "I am at length reconciled to my fate; and I can now die with pleasure, since I die revenged. I am not one of those mean wretches who can sit down and lament their misfortunes. If I ever shed tears, they are the tears of indignation. — But I will proceed.

"It was my fate now to solicit marriage; and I failed not to do it in the most earnest manner. He answered me at first with procrastinations, declaring, from time to time, he would mention it to my father; and still excusing himself for not doing it. At last he thought on an expedient to obtain a longer reprieve. This was by pretending that he should, in a very few weeks, be preferred to the command of a troop; and then, he said, he could with some confidence propose the match.

"In this delay I was persuaded to acquiesce, and was indeed pretty easy, for I had not yet the least



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mistrust of his honour; but what words can paint my sensations, when one morning he came into my room, with all the marks of dejection in his countenance, and, throwing an open letter on the table, said, 'There is news, madam, in that letter which I am unable to tell you; nor can it give you more concern than it hath given me.'

"This letter was from his captain, to acquaint him that the rout, as they call it, was arrived, and that they were to march within two days. And this, I am since convinced, was what he expected, instead of the preferment which had been made the pretence of delaying our marriage.

"The shock which I felt at reading this was inexpressible, occasioned indeed principally by the departure of a villain whom I loved. However, I soon acquired sufficient presence of mind to remember the main point; and I now insisted peremptorily on his making me immediately his wife, whatever might be the consequence.

"He seemed thunderstruck at this proposal, being, I suppose, destitute of any excuse; but I was too impatient to wait for an answer, and cried out with much eagerness, Sure you cannot hesitate a moment upon this matter — 'Hesitate! madam!' replied he — 'what you ask is impossible. Is this a time for me to mention a thing of this kind to your father?' — My eyes were now opened all at once — I fell into a rage little short of madness. Tell not me, I cried, of impossibilities, nor times, nor of my father —— my honour, my reputation, my all are at stake. — I will have no excuse, no delay — make me your wife



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this instant, or I will proclaim you over the face of the whole earth for the greatest of villains. He answered, with a kind of sneer, 'What will you proclaim, madam? — whose honour will you injure?' My tongue faltered when I offered to reply, and I fell into a violent agony, which ended in a fit; nor do I remember anything more that past till I found myself in the arms of my poor affrighted father.

"O, Mr. Booth, what was then my situation! I tremble even now from the reflection. — I must stop a moment. I can go no farther." Booth attempted all in his power to soothe her; and she soon recovered her powers, and proceeded in her story.



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## CHAPTER NINE

IN WHICH MISS MATTHEWS CONCLUDES HER RELATION.

BEFORE I had recovered my senses I had sufficiently betrayed myself to the best of men, who, instead of upbraiding me, or exerting any anger, endeavoured to comfort me all he could with assurances that all should yet be well. This goodness of his affected me with inexpressible sensations; I prostrated myself before him, embraced and kissed his knees, and almost dissolved in tears, and a degree of tenderness hardly to be conceived —— But I am running into too minute descriptions.

"Hebbers, seeing me in a fit, had left me, and sent one of the servants to take care of me. He then ran away like a thief from the house, without taking his leave of my father, or once thanking him for all his civilities. He did not stop at his quarters, but made directly to London, apprehensive, I believe, either of my father or brother's resentment; for I am convinced he is a coward. Indeed his fear of my brother was utterly groundless; for I believe he would rather have thanked any man who had destroyed me; and I am sure I am not in the least behindhand with him in good wishes.

"All his inveteracy to me had, however, no effect on my father, at least at that time; for, though the



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good man took sufficient occasions to reprimand me for my past offence, he could not be brought to abandon me. A treaty of marriage was now set on foot, in which my father himself offered me to Hebbers, with a fortune superior to that which had been given with my sister; nor could all my brother's remonstrances against it, as an act of the highest injustice, avail.

"Hebbers entered into the treaty, though not with much warmth. He had even the assurance to make additional demands on my father, which being complied with, everything was concluded, and the villain once more received into the house. He soon found means to obtain my forgiveness of his former behaviour; indeed, he convinced me, so foolishly blind is female love, that he had never been to blame.

"When everything was ready for our nuptials, and the day of the ceremony was to be appointed, in the midst of my happiness I received a letter from an unknown hand, acquainting me (guess, Mr. Booth, how I was shocked at receiving it) that Mr. Hebbers was already married to a woman in a distant part of the kingdom.

"I will not tire you with all that past at our next interview. I communicated the letter to Hebbers, who, after some little hesitation, owned the fact, and not only owned it, but had the address to improve it to his own advantage, to make it the means of satisfying me concerning all his former delays; which, to say the truth, I was not so much displeased at imputing to any degree of villany, as I should have



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been to impute it to the want of a sufficient warmth of affection, and though the disappointment of all my hopes, at the very instant of their expected fruition, threw me into the most violent disorders; yet, when I came a little to myself, he had no great difficulty to persuade me that in every instance, with regard to me, Hebbers had acted from no other motive than from the most ardent and ungovernable love. And there is, I believe, no crime which a woman will not forgive, when she can derive it from that fountain. In short, I forgave him all, and am willing to persuade myself I am not weaker than the rest of my sex. Indeed, Mr. Booth, he hath a bewitching tongue, and is master of an address that no woman could resist. I do assure you the charms of his person are his least perfection, at least in my eye."

Here Booth smiled, but happily without her perceiving it.

"A fresh difficulty" (continued she) "now arose. This was to excuse the delay of the ceremony to my father, who every day very earnestly urged it. This made me so very uneasy, that I at last listened to a proposal, which, if any one in the days of my innocence, or even a few days before, had assured me I could have submitted to have thought of, I should have treated the supposition with the highest contempt and indignation; nay, I scarce reflect on it now with more horror than astonishment. In short, I agreed to run away with him — to leave my father, my reputation, everything which was or ought to have been dear to me, and to live with this villain as a mistress, since I could not be his wife.



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"Was not this an obligation of the highest and tenderest kind, and had I not reason to expect every return in the man's power on whom I had conferred it?

"I will make short of the remainder of my story, for what is there of a woman worth relating, after what I have told you?

"Above a year I lived with this man in an obscure court in London, during which time I had a child by him, whom Heaven, I thank it, hath been pleased to take to itself.

"During many months he behaved to me with all the apparent tenderness and even fondness imaginable; but, alas! how poor was my enjoyment of this compared to what it would have been in another situation? When he was present, life was barely tolerable: but, when he was absent, nothing could equal the misery I endured. I past my hours almost entirely alone; for no company but what I despised, would consort with me. Abroad I scarce ever went, lest I should meet any of my former acquaintance; for their sight would have plunged a thousand daggers in my soul. My only diversion was going very seldom to a play, where I hid myself in the gallery, with a daughter of the woman of the house. A girl, indeed, of good sense and many good qualities; but how much beneath me was it to be the companion of a creature so low! O heavens! when I have seen my equals glittering in a side-box, how have the thoughts of my lost honour torn my soul!"

"Pardon me, dear madam," cries Booth, "for in-



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terrupting you; but I am under the utmost anxiety to know what became of your poor father, for whom I have so great a respect, and who, I am convinced, must so bitterly feel your loss."

"O Mr. Booth," answered she, "he was scarce ever out of my thoughts. His dear image still obtruded itself in my mind, and I believe would have broken my heart, had I not taken a very preposterous way to ease myself. I am, indeed, almost ashamed to tell you; but necessity put it in my head. — You will think the matter too trifling to have been remembered, and so it surely was; nor should I have remembered it on any other occasion. You must know then, sir, that my brother was always my inveterate enemy and altogether as fond of my sister. — He once prevailed with my father to let him take my sister with him in the chariot, and by that means I was disappointed of going to a ball which I had set my heart on. The disappointment, I assure you, was great at the time; but I had long since forgotten it. I must have been a very bad woman if I had not, for it was the only thing in which I can remember that my father ever disobliged me. However, I now revived this in my mind, which I artificially worked up into so high an injury, that I assure you it afforded me no little comfort. When any tender idea intruded into my bosom, I immediately raised this fantom of an injury in my imagination, and it considerably lessened the fury of that sorrow which I should have otherwise felt for the loss of so good a father, who died within a few months of my departure from him.



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"And now, sir, to draw to a conclusion. One night, as I was in the gallery at Drury-lane playhouse, I saw below me in a side-box (she was once below me in every place), that widow whom I mentioned to you before. I had scarce cast my eyes on this woman before I was so shocked with the sight that it almost deprived me of my senses; for the villain Hebbers came presently in and seated himself behind her.

"He had been almost a month from me, and I believed him to be at his quarters in Yorkshire. Guess what were my sensations when I beheld him sitting by that base woman, and talking to her with the utmost familiarity. I could not long endure this sight, and having acquainted my companion that I was taken suddenly ill, I forced her to go home with me at the end of the second act.

"After a restless and sleepless night, when I rose the next morning I had the comfort to receive a visit from the woman of the house, who, after a very short introduction, asked me when I had heard from the captain, and when I expected to see him? I had not strength or spirits to make her any answer, and she proceeded thus: — 'Indeed I did not think the captain would have used me so. My husband was an officer of the army as well as himself; and if a body is a little low in the world, I am sure that is no reason for folks to trample on a body. I defy the world to say as I ever was guilty of an ill thing.' For heaven's sake, madam, says I, what do you mean? 'Mean?' cries she; 'I am sure, if I had not thought you had been Captain Hebbers' lady, his lawful lady



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too, you should never have set footing in my house. I would have Captain Hebbers know, that though I am reduced to let lodgings, I never have entertained any but persons of character.' — In this manner, sir, she ran on, saying many shocking things not worth repeating, till my anger at last got the better of my patience as well as my sorrow, and I pushed her out of the room.

"She had not been long gone before her daughter came to me, and, after many expressions of tenderness and pity, acquainted me that her mother had just found out, by means of the captain's servant, that the captain was married to another lady; 'which, if you did not know before, madam,' said she, 'I am sorry to be the messenger of such ill news.'

"Think, Mr. Booth, what I must have endured to see myself humbled before such a creature as this, the daughter of a woman who lets lodgings! However, having recollected myself a little, I thought it would be in vain to deny anything; so, knowing this to be one of the best-natured and most sensible girls in the world, I resolved to tell her my whole story, and for the future to make her my confidante. I answered her, therefore, with a good deal of assurance, that she need not regret telling me this piece of ill news, for I had known it before I came to her house.

"'Pardon me, madam,' replied the girl, 'you cannot possibly have known it so long, for he hath not been married above a week; last night was the first time of his appearing in public with his wife at the play. Indeed, I knew very well the cause of your uneasiness there; but would not mention ——'



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"His wife at the play? answered I eagerly. What wife? whom do you mean?

"'I mean the widow Carey, madam,' replied she, 'to whom the captain was married a few days since. His servant was here last night to pay for your lodging, and he told it my mother.'

"I know not what answer I made, or whether I made any. I presently fell dead on the floor, and it was with great difficulty I was brought back to life by the poor girl, for neither the mother nor the maid of the house would lend me any assistance, both seeming to regard me rather as a monster than a woman.

"Scarce had I recovered the use of my senses when I received a letter from the villain, declaring he had not assurance to see my face, and very kindly advising me to endeavour to reconcile myself to my family, concluding with an offer, in case I did not succeed, to allow me twenty pounds a-year to support me in some remote part of the kingdom.

"I need not mention my indignation at these proposals. In the highest agony of rage, I went in a chair to the detested house, where I easily got access to the wretch I had devoted to destruction, whom I no sooner found within my reach than I plunged a drawn penknife, which I had prepared in my pocket for the purpose, into his accursed heart. For this fact I was immediately seized and soon after committed hither; and for this fact I am ready to die, and shall with pleasure receive the sentence of the law.

"Thus, sir," said she, "I have related to you my unhappy story, and if I have tired your patience, by



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dwelling too long on those parts which affected me the most, I ask your pardon."

Booth made a proper speech on this occasion, and, having exprest much concern at her present situation, concluded that he hoped her sentence would be milder than she seemed to expect.

Her reply to this was full of so much bitterness and indignation, that we do not think proper to record the speech at length, in which having vented her passion, she all at once put on a serene countenance, and with an air of great complacency said, "Well, Mr. Booth, I think I have now a right to satisfy my curiosity at the expense of your breath. I may say it is not altogether a vain curiosity, for perhaps I have had inclination enough to interest myself in whatever concerns you; but no matter for that: those days" (added she with a sigh) "are now over."

Booth, who was extremely good-natured and well-bred, told her that she should not command him twice whatever was in his power; and then, after the usual apology, was going to begin his history, when the keeper arrived, and acquainted the lady that dinner was ready, at the same time saying, "I suppose, madam, as the gentleman is an acquaintance of yours, he must dine with us too."

Miss Matthews told the keeper that she had only one word to mention in private to the gentleman, and that then they would both attend him. She then pulled her purse from her pocket, in which were upwards of twenty guineas, being the remainder of the money for which she had sold a gold repeating watch, her father's present, with some other trinkets, and de-



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sired Mr. Booth to take what he should have occasion for, saying, "You know, I believe, dear Will, I never valued money; and now I am sure I shall have very little use for it." Booth, with much difficulty, accepted of two guineas, and then they both together attended the keeper.



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## CHAPTER TEN

TABLE-TALK, CONSISTING OF A FACETIOUS DISCOURSE THAT PASSED IN THE PRISON.

THERE were assembled at the table the governor of these (not improperly called infernal) regions; the lieutenant-governor, vulgarly named the first turnkey; Miss Matthews, Mr. Booth, Mr. Robinson the gambler, several other prisoners of both sexes, and one Murphy, an attorney.

The governor took the first opportunity to bring the affair of Miss Matthews upon the carpet, and then, turning to Murphy, he said, "It is very lucky this gentleman happens to be present; I do assure you, madam, your cause cannot be in abler hands. He is, I believe, the best man in England at a defence; I have known him often succeed against the most positive evidence."

"Fy, sir," answered Murphy; "you know I hate all this; but, if the lady will trust me with her cause, I will do the best in my power. Come, madam, do not be discouraged; a bit of manslaughter and cold iron, I hope, will be the worst: or perhaps we may come off better with a slice of chance-medley, or *se defendendo*."

"I am very ignorant of the law, sir," cries the lady.



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"Yes, madam," answered Murphy; "it can't be expected you should understand it. There are very few of us who profess it that understand the whole, nor is it necessary we should. There is a great deal of rubbish of little use, about indictments, and abatements, and bars, and ejectments, and trovers, and such stuff, with which people cram their heads to little purpose. The chapter of evidence is the main business; that is the sheet-anchor; that is the rudder, which brings the vessel safe *in portum*. Evidence is, indeed, the whole, the *summa totidis*, for *de non apparentibus et non insistentibus eandem est ratio*."

"If you address yourself to me, sir," said the lady, "you are much too learned, I assure you, for my understanding."

"*Tace*, madam," answered Murphy, "is Latin for a candle: I commend your prudence. I shall know the particulars of your case when we are alone."

"I hope the lady," said Robinson, "hath no suspicion of any person here. I hope we are all persons of honour at this table."

"D—n my eyes!" answered a well-dressed woman, "I can answer for myself and the other ladies; though I never saw the lady in my life, she need not be shy of us, d—n my eyes! I scorn to rap[1] against any lady."

"D—n me, madam!" cried another female, "I honour what you have done. I once put a knife into a cull myself — so my service to you, madam, and I wish you may come off with *se diffidendo* with all my heart."

[1] A cant word, meaning to swear, or rather to perjure yourself.



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"I beg, good woman," said Miss Matthews, "you would talk on some other subject, and give yourself no concern about my affairs."

"You see, ladies," cried Murphy, "the gentlewoman doth not care to talk on this matter before company; so pray do not press her."

"Nay, I value the lady's acquaintance no more than she values mine," cries the first woman who spoke. "I have kept as good company as the lady, I believe, every day in the week. Good woman! I don't use to be so treated. If the lady says such another word to me, d—n me, I will darken her daylights. Marry, come up! Good woman!—the lady's a whore as well as myself! and, though I am sent hither to mill doll, d—n my eyes, I have money enough to buy it off as well as the lady herself."

Action might perhaps soon have ensued this speech, had not the keeper interposed his authority, and put an end to any further dispute. Soon after which, the company broke up, and none but himself, Mr. Murphy, Captain Booth, and Miss Matthews, remained together.

Miss Matthews then, at the entreaty of the keeper, began to open her case to Mr. Murphy, whom she admitted to be her solicitor, though she still declared she was indifferent as to the event of the trial.

Mr. Murphy, having heard all the particulars with which the reader is already acquainted (as far as related to the murder), shook his head and said, "There is but one circumstance, madam, which I wish was out of the case; and that we must put out of it; I mean the carrying the penknife drawn into



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the room with you; for that seems to imply malice prepensive, as we call it in the law: this circumstance, therefore, must not appear against you; and, if the servant who was in the room observed this, he must be bought off at all hazards. All here you say are friends; therefore I tell you openly, you must furnish me with money sufficient for this purpose. Malice is all we have to guard against."

"I would not presume, sir," cries Booth, "to inform you in the law; but I have heard, in case of stabbing, a man may be indicted upon the statute; and it is capital, though no malice appears."

"You say true, sir," answered Murphy; "a man may be indicted *contra formam statutis;* and that method, I allow you, requires no malice. I presume you are a lawyer, sir?"

"No, indeed, sir," answered Booth, "I know nothing of the law."

"Then, sir, I will tell you — If a man be indicted *contra formam statutis*, as we say, no malice is necessary, because the form of the statute makes malice; and then what we have to guard against is having struck the first blow. Pox on 't, it is unlucky this was done in a room: if it had been in the street we could have had five or six witnesses to have proved the first blow, cheaper than, I am afraid, we shall get this one; for when a man knows, from the unhappy circumstances of the case, that you can procure no other witness but himself, he is always dear. It is so in all other ways of business. I am very implicit, you see; but we are all among friends. The safest way is to furnish me with money enough to



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offer him a good round sum at once; and I think (it is for your good I speak) fifty pounds is the least that can be offered him. I do assure you I would offer him no less was it my own case."

"And do you think, sir," said she, "that I would save my life at the expense of hiring another to perjure himself?"

"Ay, surely do I," cries Murphy; "for where is the fault, admitting there is some fault in perjury, as you call it? and, to be sure, it is such a matter as every man would rather wish to avoid than not: and yet, as it may be managed, there is not so much as some people are apt to imagine in it; for he need not kiss the book, and then pray where's the perjury? but if the crier is sharper than ordinary, what is it he kisses? is it anything but a bit of calf's-skin? I am sure a man must be a very bad Christian himself who would not do so much as that to save the life of any Christian whatever, much more of so pretty a lady. Indeed, madam, if we can make out but a tolerable case, so much beauty will go a great way with the judge and the jury too."

The latter part of this speech, notwithstanding the mouth it came from, caused Miss Matthews to suppress much of the indignation which began to arise at the former; and she answered with a smile, "Sir, you are a great casuist in these matters; but we need argue no longer concerning them; for, if fifty pounds would save my life, I assure you I could not command that sum. The little money I have in my pocket is all I can call my own; and I apprehend, in the situation I am in, I shall have very little of that to spare."



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"Come, come, madam," cries Murphy, "life is sweet, let me tell you, and never sweeter than when we are near losing it. I have known many a man very brave and undaunted at his first commitment, who, when business began to thicken a little upon him, hath changed his note. It is no time to be saving in your condition."

The keeper, who, after the liberality of Miss Matthews, and on seeing a purse of guineas in her hand, had conceived a great opinion of her wealth, no sooner heard that the sum which he had in intention intirely confiscated for his own use was attempted to be broke in upon, thought it high time to be upon his guard. "To be sure," cries he, "Mr. Murphy, life is sweet, as you say, that must be acknowledged; to be sure, life is sweet; but, sweet as it is, no persons can advance more than they are worth to save it. And indeed, if the lady can command no more money than that little she mentions, she is to be commended for her unwillingness to part with any of it; for, to be sure, as she says, she will want every farthing of that to live like a gentlewoman till she comes to her trial. And, to be sure, as sweet as life is, people ought to take care to be able to live sweetly while they do live; besides, I cannot help saying the lady shews herself to be what she is, by her abhorrence of perjury, which is certainly a very dreadful crime. And, though the not kissing the book doth, as you say, make a great deal of difference; and, if a man had a great while to live and repent, perhaps he might swallow it well enough; yet, when people comes to be near their end (as who



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can venture to foretel what will be the lady's case?) they ought to take care not to overburthen their conscience. I hope the lady's case will not be found murder; for I am sure I always wish well to all my prisoners who shew themselves to be gentlemen or gentlewomen; yet one should always fear the worst."

"Indeed, sir, you speak like an oracle," answered the lady; "and one subornation of perjury would sit heavier on my conscience than twenty such murders as I am guilty of."

"Nay, to be sure, madam," answered the keeper, "nobody can pretend to tell what provocation you must have had; and certainly it can never be imagined that a lady who behaves herself so handsomely as you have done ever since you have been under my keys should be guilty of killing a man without being very highly provoked to do it."

Mr. Murphy was, I believe, going to answer when he was called out of the room; after which nothing passed between the remaining persons worth relating, till Booth and the lady retired back again into the lady's apartment.

Here they fell immediately to commenting on the foregoing discourse; but, as their comments were, I believe, the same with what most readers have made on the same occasion, we shall omit them. At last, Miss Matthews reminding her companion of his promise of relating to her what had befallen him since the interruption of their former acquaintance, he began as is written in the next book of this history.



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# BOOK II

## CHAPTER ONE

### IN WHICH CAPTAIN BOOTH BEGINS TO RELATE HIS HISTORY.

THE tea-table being removed, and Mr. Booth and the lady left alone, he proceeded as follows:

"Since you desire, madam, to know the particulars of my courtship to that best and dearest of women whom I afterwards married, I will endeavour to recollect them as well as I can, at least all those incidents which are most worth relating to you.

"If the vulgar opinion of the fatality in marriage had ever any foundation, it surely appeared in my marriage with my Amelia. I knew her in the first dawn of her beauty; and, I believe, madam, she had as much as ever fell to the share of a woman; but, though I always admired her, it was long without any spark of love. Perhaps the general admiration which at that time pursued her, the respect paid her by persons of the highest rank, and the numberless addresses which were made her by men of great fortune, prevented my aspiring at the possession of those charms which seemed so absolutely out of my reach. However it was, I assure you the accident



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which deprived her of the admiration of others made the first great impression on my heart in her favour. The injury done to her beauty by the overturning of a chaise, by which, as you may well remember, her lovely nose was beat all to pieces, gave me an assurance that the woman who had been so much adored for the charms of her person deserved a much higher adoration to be paid to her mind; for that she was in the latter respect infinitely more superior to the rest of her sex than she had ever been in the former."

"I admire your taste extremely," cried the lady; "I remember perfectly well the great heroism with which your Amelia bore that misfortune."

"Good heavens! madam," answered he; "what a magnanimity of mind did her behaviour demonstrate! If the world have extolled the firmness of soul in a man who can support the loss of fortune; of a general who can be composed after the loss of a victory; or of a king who can be contented with the loss of a crown; with what astonishment ought we to behold, with what praises to honour, a young lady, who can with patience and resignation submit to the loss of exquisite beauty, in other words to the loss of fortune, power, glory, everything which human nature is apt to court and rejoice in! what must be the mind which can bear to be deprived of all these in a moment, and by an unfortunate trifling accident; which could support all this, together with the most exquisite torments of body, and with dignity, with resignation, without complaining, almost without a tear, undergo the most painful and dreadful operations of surgery in such a situation!" Here



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he stopt, and a torrent of tears gushed from his eyes; such tears are apt to flow from a truly noble heart at the hearing of anything surprisingly great and glorious. As soon as he was able he again proceeded thus:

"Would you think, Miss Matthews, that the misfortune of my Amelia was capable of any aggravation? I assure you, she hath often told me it was aggravated with a circumstance which outweighed all the other ingredients. This was the cruel insults she received from some of her most intimate acquaintance, several of whom, after many distortions and grimaces, have turned their heads aside, unable to support their secret triumph, and burst into a loud laugh in her hearing."

"Good heavens!" cried Miss Matthews; "what detestable actions will this contemptible passion of envy prevail on our sex to commit!"

"An occasion of this kind, as she hath since told me, made the first impression on her gentle heart in my favour. I was one day in company with several young ladies, or rather young devils, where poor Amelia's accident was the subject of much mirth and pleasantry. One of these said she hoped miss would not hold her head so high for the future. Another answered, 'I do not know, madam, what she may do with her head, but I am convinced she will never more turn up her nose at her betters.' Another cried, 'What a very proper match might now be made between Amelia and a certain captain,' who had unfortunately received an injury in the same part, though from no shameful cause. Many other



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sarcasms were thrown out, very unworthy to be repeated. I was hurt with perceiving so much malice in human shape, and cried out very bluntly, Indeed, ladies, you need not express such satisfaction at poor Miss Emily's accident; for she will still be the handsomest woman in England. This speech of mine was afterwards variously repeated, by some to my honour, and by others represented in a contrary light; indeed, it was often reported to be much ruder than it was. However, it at length reached Amelia's ears. She said she was very much obliged to me, since I could have so much compassion for her as to be rude to a lady on her account.

"About a month after the accident, when Amelia began to see company in a mask, I had the honour to drink tea with her. We were alone together, and I begged her to indulge my curiosity by showing me her face. She answered in a most obliging manner, 'Perhaps, Mr. Booth, you will as little know me when my mask is off as when it is on;' and at the same instant unmasked. — The surgeon's skill was the least I considered. A thousand tender ideas rushed all at once on my mind. I was unable to contain myself, and, eagerly kissing her hand, I cried — Upon my soul, madam, you never appeared to me so lovely as at this instant. Nothing more remarkable passed at this visit; but I sincerely believe we were neither of us hereafter indifferent to each other.

"Many months, however, passed after this, before I ever thought seriously of making her my wife. Not that I wanted sufficient love for Amelia. Indeed it



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arose from the vast affection I bore her. I considered my own as a desperate fortune, hers as entirely dependent on her mother, who was a woman, you know, of violent passions, and very unlikely to consent to a match so highly contrary to the interest of her daughter. The more I loved Amelia, the more firmly I resolved within myself never to propose love to her seriously. Such a dupe was my understanding to my heart, and so foolishly did I imagine I could be master of a flame to which I was every day adding fuel.

"O, Miss Matthews! we have heard of men entirely masters of their passions, and of hearts which can carry this fire in them, and conceal it at their pleasure. Perhaps there may be such: but, if there are, those hearts may be compared, I believe, to damps, in which it is more difficult to keep fire alive than to prevent its blazing: in mine it was placed in the midst of combustible matter.

"After several visits, in which looks and sighs had been interchanged on both sides, but without the least mention of passion in private, one day the discourse between us when alone happened to turn on love; I say happened, for I protest it was not designed on my side, and I am as firmly convinced not on hers. I was now no longer master of myself; I declared myself the most wretched of all martyrs to this tender passion; that I had long concealed it from its object. At length, after mentioning many particulars, suppressing, however, those which must have necessarily brought it home to Amelia, I concluded with begging her to be the confidante



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of my amour, and to give me her advice on that occasion.

"Amelia (O, I shall never forget the dear perturbation!) appeared all confusion at this instant. She trembled, turned pale, and discovered how well she understood me, by a thousand more symptoms than I could take notice of, in a state of mind so very little different from her own. At last, with faltering accents, she said I had made a very ill choice of a counsellor in a matter in which she was so ignorant. — Adding, at last, 'I believe, Mr. Booth, you gentlemen want very little advice in these affairs, which you all understand better than we do.'

"I will relate no more of our conversation at present; indeed I am afraid I tire you with too many particulars."

"O, no!" answered she; "I should be glad to hear every step of an amour which had so tender a beginning. Tell me everything you said or did, if you can remember it."

He then proceeded, and so will we in the next chapter.



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## CHAPTER TWO

MR. BOOTH CONTINUES HIS STORY. IN THIS CHAPTER THERE ARE SOME PASSAGES THAT MAY SERVE AS A KIND OF TOUCHSTONE BY WHICH A YOUNG LADY MAY EXAMINE THE HEART OF HER LOVER. I WOULD ADVISE, THEREFORE, THAT EVERY LOVER BE OBLIGED TO READ IT OVER IN THE PRESENCE OF HIS MISTRESS, AND THAT SHE CAREFULLY WATCH HIS EMOTIONS WHILE HE IS READING.

I WAS under the utmost concern," cries Booth, "when I retired from my visit, and had reflected coolly on what I had said. I now saw plainly that I had made downright love to Amelia; and I feared, such was my vanity, that I had already gone too far, and been too successful. Feared! do I say? could I fear what I hoped? how shall I describe the anxiety of my mind?"

"You need give yourself no great pain," cried Miss Matthews, "to describe what I can so easily guess. To be honest with you, Mr. Booth, I do not agree with your lady's opinion that the men have a superior understanding in the matters of love. Men are often blind to the passions of women: but every woman is as quick-sighted as a hawk on these occasions; nor is there one article in the whole science which is not understood by all our sex."



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"However, madam," said Mr. Booth, "I now undertook to deceive Amelia. I abstained three days from seeing her; to say the truth, I endeavoured to work myself up to a resolution of leaving her for ever: but when I could not so far subdue my passion —— But why do I talk nonsense of subduing passion? — I should say, when no other passion could surmount my love, I returned to visit her; and now I attempted the strangest project which ever entered into the silly head of a lover. This was to persuade Amelia that I was really in love in another place, and had literally expressed my meaning when I asked her advice and desired her to be my confidante.

"I therefore forged a meeting to have been between me and my imaginary mistress since I had last seen Amelia, and related the particulars, as well as I could invent them, which had passed at our conversation.

"Poor Amelia presently swallowed this bait; and, as she hath told me since, absolutely believed me to be in earnest. Poor dear love! how should the sincerest of hearts have any idea of deceit? for, with all her simplicity, I assure you she is the most sensible woman in the world."

"It is highly generous and good in you," said Miss Matthews, with a sly sneer, "to impute to honesty what others would, perhaps, call credulity."

"I protest, madam," answered he, "I do her no more than justice. A good heart will at all times betray the best head in the world. —— Well, madam, my angel was now, if possible, more confused than before. She looked so silly, you can hardly believe it."

"Yes, yes, I can," answered the lady, with a laugh,



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"I can believe it. — Well, well, go on." — "After some hesitation," cried he, "my Amelia said faintly to me, 'Mr. Booth, you use me very ill; you desire me to be your confidante, and conceal from me the name of your mistress.'

"Is it possible then, madam, answered I, that you cannot guess her, when I tell you she is one of your acquaintance, and lives in this town?

"'My acquaintance!' said she: 'La! Mr. Booth — In this town! I — I — I thought I could have guessed for once; but I have an ill talent that way — I will never attempt to guess anything again.' Indeed I do her an injury when I pretend to represent her manner. Her manner, look, voice, everything was inimitable; such sweetness, softness, innocence, modesty! — Upon my soul, if ever man could boast of his resolution, I think I might now, that I abstained from falling prostrate at her feet, and adoring her. However, I triumphed; pride, I believe, triumphed, or perhaps love got the better of love. We once more parted, and I promised, the next time I saw her, to reveal the name of my mistress.

"I now had, I thought, gained a complete victory over myself; and no small compliments did I pay to my own resolution. In short, I triumphed as cowards and niggards do when they flatter themselves with having given some supposed instance of courage or generosity; and my triumph lasted as long; that is to say, till my ascendant passion had a proper opportunity of displaying itself in its true and natural colours.

"Having hitherto succeeded so well in my own



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opinion, and obtained this mighty self-conquest, I now entertained a design of exerting the most romantic generosity, and of curing that unhappy passion which I perceived I had raised in Amelia.

"Among the ladies who had expressed the greatest satisfaction at my Amelia's misfortune, Miss Osborne had distinguished herself in a very eminent degree; she was, indeed, the next in beauty to my angel, nay, she had disputed the preference, and had some among her admirers who were blind enough to give it in her favour."

"Well," cries the lady, "I will allow you to call them blind; but Miss Osborne was a charming girl."

"She certainly was handsome," answered he, "and a very considerable fortune; so I thought my Amelia would have little difficulty in believing me when I fixed on her as my mistress. And I concluded that my thus placing my affections on her known enemy would be the surest method of eradicating every tender idea with which I had been ever honoured by Amelia.

"Well, then, to Amelia I went; she received me with more than usual coldness and reserve; in which, to confess the truth, there appeared to me more of anger than indifference, and more of dejection than of either. After some short introduction, I revived the discourse of my amour, and presently mentioned Miss Osborne as the lady whose name I had concealed; adding, that the true reason why I did not mention her before was, that I apprehended there was some little distance between them, which I hoped to have the happiness of accommodating.



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"Amelia answered with much gravity, 'If you know, sir, that there is any distance between us, I suppose you know the reason of that distance; and then, I think, I could not have expected to be affronted by her name. I would not have you think, Mr. Booth, that I hate Miss Osborne. No! Heaven is my witness, I despise her too much. — Indeed, when I reflect how much I loved the woman who hath treated me so cruelly, I own it gives me pain — when I lay, as I then imagined, and as all about me believed, on my death-bed, in all the agonies of pain and misery, to become the object of laughter to my dearest friend.—O, Mr. Booth, it is a cruel reflection! and could I after this have expected from you — but why not from you, to whom I am a person entirely indifferent, if such a friend could treat me so barbarously?'

"During the greatest part of this speech the tears streamed from her bright eyes. I could endure it no longer. I caught up the word indifferent, and repeated it, saying, Do you think then, madam, that Miss Emily is indifferent to me?

"'Yes, surely, I do,' answered she: 'I know I am; indeed, why should I not be indifferent to you?'

"Have my eyes, said I, then declared nothing?

"'O! there is no need of your eyes,' answered she; 'your tongue hath declared that you have singled out of all womankind my greatest, I will say, my basest enemy. I own I once thought that character would have been no recommendation to you; — but why did I think so? I was born to deceive myself.'



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"I then fell on my knees before her; and, forcing her hand, cried out, O, my Amelia! I can bear no longer. You are the only mistress of my affections; you are the deity I adore. In this stile I ran on for above two or three minutes, what it is impossible to repeat, till a torrent of contending passions, together with the surprize, overpowered her gentle spirits, and she fainted away in my arms.

"To describe my sensation till she returned to herself is not in my power."—"You need not," cried Miss Matthews.—"Oh, happy Amelia! why had I not been blest with such a passion?"—"I am convinced, madam," continued he, "you cannot expect all the particulars of the tender scene which ensued. I was not enough in my senses to remember it all. Let it suffice to say, that that behaviour with which Amelia, while ignorant of its motive, had been so much displeased, when she became sensible of that motive, proved the strongest recommendation to her favour, and she was pleased to call it generous."

"Generous!" repeated the lady, "and so it was, almost beyond the reach of humanity. I question whether you ever had an equal."

Perhaps the critical reader may have the same doubt with Miss Matthews; and lest he should, we will here make a gap in our history, to give him an opportunity of accurately considering whether this conduct of Mr. Booth was natural or no; and consequently, whether we have, in this place, maintained or deviated from that strict adherence to universal truth which we profess above all other historians.



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## CHAPTER THREE

THE NARRATIVE CONTINUED. MORE OF THE TOUCH-STONE.

BOOTH made a proper acknowledgment of Miss Matthews's civility, and then renewed his story.

"We were upon the footing of lovers; and Amelia threw off her reserve more and more, till at length I found all that return of my affection which the tenderest lover can require.

"My situation would now have been a paradise, had not my happiness been interrupted with the same reflections I have already mentioned; had I not, in short, concluded, that I must derive all my joys from the almost certain ruin of that dear creature to whom I should owe them.

"This thought haunted me night and day, till I at last grew unable to support it: I therefore resolved in the strongest manner, to lay it before Amelia.

"One evening then, after the highest professions of the most disinterested love, in which Heaven knows my sincerity, I took an occasion to speak to Amelia in the following manner:—

"Too true it is, I am afraid, my dearest creature, that the highest human happiness is imperfect.



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How rich would be my cup, was it not for one poisonous drop which embitters the whole! O, Amelia! what must be the consequence of my ever having the honour to call you mine! — You know my situation in life, and you know your own: I have nothing more than the poor provision of an ensign's commission to depend on; your sole dependance is on your mother; should any act of disobedience defeat your expectations, how wretched must your lot be with me! O, Amelia! how ghastly an object to my mind is the apprehension of your distress! Can I bear to reflect a moment on the certainty of your foregoing all the conveniences of life? on the possibility of your suffering all its most dreadful inconveniences? what must be my misery, then, to see you in such a situation, and to upbraid myself with being the accursed cause of bringing you to it? Suppose too in such a season I should be summoned from you. Could I submit to see you encounter all the hazards, the fatigues of war, with me? you could not yourself, however willing, support them a single campaign. What then; must I leave you to starve alone, deprived of the tenderness of a husband, deprived too of the tenderness of the best of mothers, through my means? a woman most dear to me, for being the parent, the nurse, and the friend of my Amelia.—— But oh! my sweet creature, carry your thoughts a little further. Think of the tenderest consequences, the dearest pledges of our love. Can I bear to think of entailing beggary on the posterity of my Amelia? on our —— Oh, Heavens! — on our children! — On the other side, is it possible even to



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mention the word — I will not, must not, cannot, cannot part with you.—— What must we do, Amelia? It is now I sincerely ask your advice.

"'What advice can I give you,' said she, 'in such an alternative? Would to Heaven we had never met!'

"These words were accompanied with a sigh, and a look inexpressibly tender, the tears at the same time overflowing all her lovely cheeks. I was endeavouring to reply when I was interrupted by what soon put an end to the scene.

"Our amour had already been buzzed all over the town; and it came at last to the ears of Mrs. Harris: I had, indeed, observed of late a great alteration in that lady's behaviour towards me whenever I visited at the house; nor could I, for a long time before this evening, ever obtain a private interview with Amelia; and now, it seems, I owed it to her mother's intention of overhearing all that passed between us.

"At the period then above mentioned, Mrs. Harris burst from the closet where she had hid herself, and surprised her daughter, reclining on my bosom in all that tender sorrow I have just described. I will not attempt to paint the rage of the mother, or the daughter's confusion, or my own. 'Here are very fine doings, indeed,' cried Mrs. Harris: 'you have made a noble use, Amelia, of my indulgence, and the trust I reposed in you. — As for you, Mr. Booth, I will not accuse you; you have used my child as I ought to have expected; I may thank myself for what hath happened;' with much more of



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the same kind, before she would suffer me to speak; but at last I obtained a hearing, and offered to excuse my poor Amelia, who was ready to sink into the earth under the oppression of grief, by taking as much blame as I could on myself. Mrs. Harris answered, 'No, sir, I must say you are innocent in comparison of her; nay, I can say I have heard you use dissuasive arguments; and I promise you they are of weight. I have, I thank Heaven, one dutiful child, and I shall henceforth think her my only one.' —She then forced the poor, trembling, fainting Amelia out of the room; which when she had done, she began very coolly to reason with me on the folly, as well as iniquity, which I had been guilty of; and repeated to me almost every word I had before urged to her daughter. In fine, she at last obtained of me a promise that I would soon go to my regiment, and submit to any misery rather than that of being the ruin of Amelia.

"I now, for many days, endured the greatest torments which the human mind is, I believe, capable of feeling; and I can honestly say I tried all the means, and applied every argument which I could raise, to cure me of my love. And to make these the more effectual, I spent every night in walking backwards and forwards in the sight of Mrs. Harris's house, where I never failed to find some object or other which raised some tender idea of my lovely Amelia, and almost drove me to distraction."

"And don't you think, sir," said Miss Matthews, "you took a most preposterous method to cure yourself?"



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"Alas, madam," answered he, "you cannot see it in a more absurd light than I do; but those know little of real love or grief who do not know how much we deceive ourselves when we pretend to aim at the cure of either. It is with these, as it is with some distempers of the body, nothing is in the least agreeable to us but what serves to heighten the disease.

"At the end of a fortnight, when I was driven almost to the highest degree of despair, and could contrive no method of conveying a letter to Amelia, how was I surprised when Mrs. Harris's servant brought me a card, with an invitation from the mother herself to drink tea that evening at her house!

"You will easily believe, madam, that I did not fail so agreeable an appointment: on my arrival I was introduced into a large company of men and women, Mrs. Harris and my Amelia being part of the company.

"Amelia seemed in my eyes to look more beautiful than ever, and behaved with all the gaiety imaginable. The old lady treated me with much civility, but the young lady took little notice of me, and addressed most of her discourse to another gentleman present. Indeed, she now and then gave me a look of no discouraging kind, and I observed her colour change more than once when her eyes met mine; circumstances, which, perhaps, ought to have afforded me sufficient comfort, but they could not allay the thousand doubts and fears with which I was alarmed, for my anxious thoughts suggested no less to me



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than that Amelia had made her peace with her mother at the price of abandoning me for ever, and of giving her ear to some other lover. All my prudence now vanished at once; and I would that instant have gladly run away with Amelia, and have married her without the least consideration of any consequences.

"With such thoughts I had tormented myself for near two hours, till most of the company had taken their leave. This I was myself incapable of doing, nor do I know when I should have put an end to my visit, had not Dr. Harrison taken me away almost by force, telling me in a whisper that he had something to say to me of great consequence. — You know the doctor, madam — "

"Very well, sir," answered Miss Matthews, "and one of the best men in the world he is, and an honour to the sacred order to which he belongs."

"You will judge," replied Booth, "by the sequel, whether I have reason to think him so." — He then proceeded as in the next chapter.



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## CHAPTER FOUR

THE STORY OF MR. BOOTH CONTINUED. IN THIS CHAPTER THE READER WILL PERCEIVE A GLIMPSE OF THE CHARACTER OF A VERY GOOD DIVINE, WITH SOME MATTERS OF A VERY TENDER KIND.

THE doctor conducted me into his study, and then, desiring me to sit down, began, as near as I can remember, in these words, or at least to this purpose:

"'You cannot imagine, young gentleman, that your love for Miss Emily is any secret in this place; I have known it some time, and have been, I assure you, very much your enemy in this affair.'

"I answered, that I was very much obliged to him.

"'Why, so you are,' replied he; 'and so, perhaps, you will think yourself when you know all. — I went about a fortnight ago to Mrs. Harris, to acquaint her with my apprehensions on her daughter's account; for, though the matter was much talked of, I thought it might possibly not have reached her ears. I will be very plain with you. I advised her to take all possible care of the young lady, and even to send her to some place, where she might be effectually kept out of your reach while you remained in the town.'



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"And do you think, sir, said I, that this was acting a kind part by me? or do you expect that I should thank you on this occasion?

"'Young man,' answered he, 'I did not intend you any kindness, nor do I desire any of your thanks. My intention was to preserve a worthy lady from a young fellow of whom I had heard no good character, and whom I imagined to have a design of stealing a human creature for the sake of her fortune.'

"It was very kind of you, indeed, answered I, to entertain such an opinion of me.

"'Why, sir,' replied the doctor, 'it is the opinion which, I believe, most of you young gentlemen of the order of the rag deserve. I have known some instances, and have heard of more, where such young fellows have committed robbery under the name of marriage.'

"I was going to interrupt him with some anger when he desired me to have a little patience, and then informed me that he had visited Mrs. Harris with the above-mentioned design the evening after the discovery I have related; that Mrs. Harris, without waiting for his information, had recounted to him all which had happened the evening before; and, indeed, she must have an excellent memory, for I think she repeated every word I said, and added, that she had confined her daughter to her chamber, where she kept her a close prisoner, and had not seen her since.

"I cannot express, nor would modesty suffer me if I could, all that now past. The doctor took me by



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the hand and burst forth into the warmest commendations of the sense and generosity which he was pleased to say discovered themselves in my speech. You know, madam, his strong and singular way of expressing himself on all occasions, especially when he is affected with anything. 'Sir,' said he, 'if I knew half a dozen such instances in the army, the painter should put red liveries upon all the saints in my closet.'

"From this instant, the doctor told me, he had become my friend and zealous advocate with Mrs. Harris, on whom he had at last prevailed, though not without the greatest difficulty, to consent to my marrying Amelia, upon condition that I settled every penny which the mother should lay down, and that she would retain a certain sum in her hands which she would at any time deposit for my advancement in the army.

"You will, I hope, madam, conceive that I made no hesitation at these conditions, nor need I mention the joy which I felt on this occasion, or the acknowledgment I paid the doctor, who is, indeed, as you say, one of the best of men.

"The next morning I had permission to visit Amelia, who received me in such a manner, that I now concluded my happiness to be complete.

"Everything was now agreed on all sides, and lawyers employed to prepare the writings, when an unexpected cloud arose suddenly in our serene sky, and all our joys were obscured in a moment.

"When matters were, as I apprehended, drawing near a conclusion, I received an express, that a sister



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whom I tenderly loved was seized with a violent fever, and earnestly desired me to come to her. I immediately obeyed the summons, and, as it was then about two in the morning, without staying even to take leave of Amelia, for whom I left a short billet, acquainting her with the reason of my absence.

"The gentleman's house where my sister then was stood at fifty miles' distance, and, though I used the utmost expedition, the unmerciful distemper had, before my arrival, entirely deprived the poor girl of her senses, as it soon after did of her life.

"Not all the love I bore Amelia, nor the tumultuous delight with which the approaching hour of possessing her filled my heart, could, for a while, allay my grief at the loss of my beloved Nancy. Upon my soul, I cannot yet mention her name without tears. Never brother and sister had, I believe, a higher friendship for each other. Poor dear girl! whilst I sat by her in her light-head fits, she repeated scarce any other name but mine; and it plainly appeared that, when her dear reason was ravished away from her, it had left my image on her fancy, and that the last use she made of it was to think on me. 'Send for my dear Billy immediately,' she cried; 'I know he will come to me in a moment. Will nobody fetch him to me? pray don't kill me before I see him once more. You durst not use me so if he was here.' — Every accent still rings in my ears. Oh, heavens! to hear this, and at the same time to see the poor delirious creature deriving the greatest horrors from my sight, and mistaking me for a highwayman who had a little before robbed



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her. But I ask your pardon; the sensations I felt are to be known only from experience, and to you must appear dull and insipid. At last, she seemed for a moment to know me, and cried, 'O heavens! my dearest brother!' upon which she fell into immediate convulsions, and died away in my arms."

Here Mr. Booth stopped a moment, and wiped his eyes; and Miss Matthews, perhaps out of complaisance, wiped hers.



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## CHAPTER FIVE

CONTAINING STRANGE REVOLUTIONS OF FORTUNE.

BOOTH proceeded thus:

"This loss, perhaps, madam, you will think had made me miserable enough; but Fortune did not think so; for, on the day when my Nancy was to be buried, a courier arrived from Dr. Harrison, with a letter, in which the doctor acquainted me that he was just come from Mrs. Harris when he despatched the express, and earnestly desired me to return the very instant I received his letter, as I valued my Amelia. 'Though if the daughter,' added he, 'should take after her mother (as most of them do) it will be, perhaps, wiser in you to stay away.'

"I presently sent for the messenger into my room, and with much difficulty extorted from him that a great squire in his coach and six was come to Mrs. Harris's, and that the whole town said he was shortly to be married to Amelia.

"I now soon perceived how much superior my love for Amelia was to every other passion; poor Nancy's idea disappeared in a moment; I quitted the dear lifeless corpse, over which I had shed a thousand tears, left the care of her funeral to others, and posted, I may almost say flew, back to Amelia, and



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alighted at the doctor's house, as he had desired me in his letter.

"The good man presently acquainted me with what had happened in my absence. Mr. Winckworth had, it seems, arrived the very day of my departure, with a grand equipage, and, without delay, had made formal proposals to Mrs. Harris, offering to settle any part of his vast estate, in whatever manner she pleased, on Amelia. These proposals the old lady had, without any deliberation, accepted, and had insisted, in the most violent manner, on her daughter's compliance, which Amelia had as peremptorily refused to give; insisting, on her part, on the consent which her mother had before given to our marriage, in which she was heartily seconded by the doctor, who declared to her, as he now did to me, 'that we ought as much to be esteemed man and wife as if the ceremony had already past between us.'

"These remonstrances, the doctor told me, had worked no effect on Mrs. Harris, who still persisted in her avowed resolution of marrying her daughter to Winckworth, whom the doctor had likewise attacked, telling him that he was paying his addresses to another man's wife; but all to no purpose; the young gentleman was too much in love to hearken to any dissuasives.

"We now entered into a consultation what means to employ. The doctor earnestly protested against any violence to be offered to the person of Winckworth, which, I believe, I had rashly threatened; declaring that, if I made any attempt of that kind, he would for ever abandon my cause. I made him a



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solemn promise of forbearance. At last he determined to pay another visit to Mrs. Harris, and, if he found her obdurate, he said he thought himself at liberty to join us together without any further consent of the mother, which every parent, he said, had a right to refuse, but not retract when given, unless the party himself, by some conduct of his, gave a reason.

"The doctor having made his visit with no better success than before, the matter now debated was, how to get possession of Amelia by stratagem, for she was now a closer prisoner than ever; was her mother's bedfellow by night, and never out of her sight by day.

"While we were deliberating on this point a wine-merchant of the town came to visit the doctor, to inform him that he had just bottled off a hogshead of excellent old port, of which he offered to spare him a hamper, saying that he was that day to send in twelve dozen to Mrs. Harris.

"The doctor now smiled at a conceit which came into his head; and, taking me aside, asked me if I had love enough for the young lady to venture into the house in a hamper. I joyfully leapt at the proposal, to which the merchant, at the doctor's intercession, consented; for I believe, madam, you know the great authority which that worthy man had over the whole town. The doctor, moreover, promised to procure a licence, and to perform the office for us at his house, if I could find any means of conveying Amelia thither.

"In this hamper, then, I was carried to the house, and deposited in the entry, where I had not lain long



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before I was again removed and packed up in a cart in order to be sent five miles into the country; for I heard the orders given as I lay in the entry; and there I likewise heard that Amelia and her mother were to follow me the next morning.

"I was unloaded from my cart, and set down with the rest of the lumber in a great hall. Here I remained about three hours, impatiently waiting for the evening, when I determined to quit a posture which was become very uneasy, and break my prison; but Fortune contrived to release me sooner, by the following means: The house where I now was had been left in the care of one maid-servant. This faithful creature came into the hall with the footman who had driven the cart. A scene of the highest fondness having past between them, the fellow proposed, and the maid consented, to open the hamper and drink a bottle together, which, they agreed, their mistress would hardly miss in such a quantity. They presently began to execute their purpose. They opened the hamper, and, to their great surprise, discovered the contents.

"I took an immediate advantage of the consternation which appeared in the countenances of both the servants, and had sufficient presence of mind to improve the knowledge of those secrets to which I was privy. I told them that it entirely depended on their behaviour to me whether their mistress should ever be acquainted, either with what they had done or with what they had intended to do; for that if they would keep my secret I would reciprocally keep theirs. I then acquainted them with my purpose of lying



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concealed in the house, in order to watch an opportunity of obtaining a private interview with Amelia.

"In the situation in which these two delinquents stood, you may be assured it was not difficult for me to seal up their lips. In short, they agreed to whatever I proposed. I lay that evening in my dear Amelia's bedchamber, and was in the morning conveyed into an old lumber-garret, where I was to wait till Amelia (whom the maid promised, on her arrival, to inform of my place of concealment) could find some opportunity of seeing me."

"I ask pardon for interrupting you," cries Miss Matthews, "but you bring to my remembrance a foolish story which I heard at that time, though at a great distance from you: That an officer had, in confederacy with Miss Harris, broke open her mother's cellar and stole away a great quantity of her wine. I mention it only to shew you what sort of foundations most stories have."

Booth told her he had heard some such thing himself, and then continued his story as in the next chapter.



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## CHAPTER SIX

### CONTAINING MANY SURPRISING ADVENTURES.

"HERE," continued he, "I remained the whole day in hopes of a happiness, the expected approach of which gave me such a delight that I would not have exchanged my poor lodgings for the finest palace in the universe.

"A little after it was dark Mrs. Harris arrived, together with Amelia and her sister. I cannot express how much my heart now began to flutter; for, as my hopes every moment encreased, strange fears, which I had not felt before, began now to intermingle with them.

"When I had continued full two hours in these circumstances, I heard a woman's step tripping upstairs, which I fondly hoped was my Amelia; but all on a sudden the door flew open, and Mrs. Harris herself appeared at it, with a countenance pale as death, her whole body trembling, I suppose with anger; she fell upon me in the most bitter language. It is not necessary to repeat what she said, nor indeed can I, I was so shocked and confounded on this occasion. In a word, the scene ended with my departure without seeing Amelia."

"And pray," cries Miss Matthews, "how happened this unfortunate discovery?"



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Booth answered, That the lady at supper ordered a bottle of wine, "which neither myself," says he, "nor the servants had presence of mind to provide. Being told there was none in the house, though she had been before informed that the things came all safe, she had sent for the maid, who, being unable to devise any excuse, had fallen on her knees, and, after confessing her design of opening a bottle, which she imputed to the fellow, betrayed poor me to her mistress.

"Well, madam, after a lecture of about a quarter of an hour's duration from Mrs. Harris, I suffered her to conduct me to the outward gate of her court-yard, whence I set forward in a disconsolate condition of mind towards my lodgings. I had five miles to walk in a dark and rainy night: but how can I mention these trifling circumstances as any aggravation of my disappointment!"

"How was it possible," cried Miss Matthews, "that you could be got out of the house without seeing Miss Harris?"

"I assure you, madam," answered Booth, "I have often wondered at it myself; but my spirits were so much sunk at the sight of her mother, that no man was ever a greater coward than I was at that instant. Indeed, I believe my tender concern for the terrors of Amelia were the principal cause of my submission. However it was, I left the house, and walked about a hundred yards, when, at the corner of the garden-wall, a female voice, in a whisper, cried out, 'Mr. Booth.' The person was extremely near me, but it was so dark I could scarce see her; nor did I, in the confusion



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I was in, immediately recognize the voice. I answered in a line of Congreve's, which burst from my lips spontaneously; for I am sure I had no intention to quote plays at that time.

"'Who calls the wretched thing that was Alphonso?'

"Upon which a woman leapt into my arms, crying out — 'O! it is indeed my Alphonso, my only Alphonso!' — O Miss Matthews! guess what I felt when I found I had my Amelia in my arms. I embraced her with an ecstasy not to be described, at the same instant pouring a thousand tendernesses into her ears; at least, if I could express so many to her in a minute, for in that time the alarm began at the house; Mrs. Harris had mist her daughter, and the court was presently full of lights and noises of all kinds.

"I now lifted Amelia over a gate, and, jumping after, we crept along together by the side of a hedge, a different way from what led to the town, as I imagined that would be the road through which they would pursue us. In this opinion I was right; for we heard them pass along that road, and the voice of Mrs. Harris herself, who ran with the rest, notwithstanding the darkness and the rain. By these means we luckily made our escape, and clambring over hedge and ditch, my Amelia performing the part of a heroine all the way, we at length arrived at a little green lane, where stood a vast spreading oak, under which we sheltered ourselves from a violent storm.

"When this was over and the moon began to



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appear, Amelia declared she knew very well where she was; and, a little farther striking into another lane to the right, she said that would lead us to a house where we should be both safe and unsuspected. I followed her directions, and we at length came to a little cottage about three miles distant from Mrs. Harris's house.

"As it now rained very violently, we entered this cottage, in which we espied a light, without any ceremony. Here we found an elderly woman sitting by herself at a little fire, who had no sooner viewed us than she instantly sprung from her seat, and starting back gave the strongest tokens of amazement; upon which Amelia said, 'Be not surprised, nurse, though you see me in a strange pickle, I own.' The old woman, after having several times blessed herself, and expressed the most tender concern for the lady who stood dripping before her, began to bestir herself in making up the fire; at the same time entreating Amelia that she might be permitted to furnish her with some cloaths, which, she said, though not fine, were clean and wholesome and much dryer than her own. I seconded this motion so vehemently, that Amelia, though she declared herself under no apprehension of catching cold (she hath indeed the best constitution in the world), at last consented, and I retired without doors under a shed, to give my angel an opportunity of dressing herself in the only room which the cottage afforded below-stairs.

"At my return into the room, Amelia insisted on my exchanging my coat for one which belonged to



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BOOTH AND AMELIA FIND SHELTER FROM THE STORM

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*We at length came to a little cottage about three miles distant from Mrs. Harris's house*

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the old woman's son." "I am very glad," cried Miss Matthews, "to find she did not forget you. I own I thought it somewhat cruel to turn you out into the rain." — "O, Miss Matthews!" continued he, taking no notice of her observation, "I had now an opportunity of contemplating the vast power of exquisite beauty, which nothing almost can add to or diminish. Amelia, in the poor rags of her old nurse, looked scarce less beautiful than I have seen her appear at a ball or an assembly." "Well, well," cries Miss Matthews, "to be sure she did; but pray go on with your story."

"The old woman," continued he, "after having equipped us as well as she could, and placed our wet cloaths before the fire, began to grow inquisitive; and, after some ejaculations, she cried — 'O, my dear young madam! my mind misgives me hugeously; and pray who is this fine young gentleman? Oh! Miss Emmy, Miss Emmy, I am afraid madam knows nothing of all this matter.' 'Suppose he should be my husband, nurse,' answered Amelia. 'Oh! good! and if he be,' replies the nurse, 'I hope he is some great gentleman or other, with a vast estate and a coach and six: for to be sure, if an he was the greatest lord in the land, you would deserve it all.' But why do I attempt to mimic the honest creature? In short, she discovered the greatest affection for my Amelia; with which I was much more delighted than I was offended at the suspicions she shewed of me, or the many bitter curses which she denounced against me, if I ever proved a bad husband to so sweet a young lady.



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"I so well improved the hint given me by Amelia, that the old woman had no doubt of our being really married; and, comforting herself that, if it was not as well as it might have been, yet madam had enough for us both, and that happiness did not always depend on great riches, she began to rail at the old lady for having turned us out of doors, which I scarce told an untruth in asserting. And when Amelia said, 'She hoped her nurse would not betray her,' the good woman answered with much warmth —'Betray you, my dear young madam! no, that I would not, if the king would give me all that he is worth: no, not if madam herself would give me the great house, and the whole farm belonging to it.'

"The good woman then went out and fetched a chicken from the roost, which she killed, and began to pick, without asking any questions. Then, summoning her son, who was in bed, to her assistance, she began to prepare this chicken for our supper. This she afterwards set before us in so neat, I may almost say elegant, a manner, that whoever would have disdained it either doth not know the sensation of hunger, or doth not deserve to have it gratified. Our food was attended with some ale, which our kind hostess said she intended not to have tapped till Christmas; 'but,' added she, 'I little thought ever to have the honour of seeing my dear honoured lady in this poor place.'

"For my own part, no human being was then an object of envy to me, and even Amelia seemed to be in pretty good spirits; she softly whispered to me



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coming immediately up to Amelia, after some expressions of surprise, he took her by the hand, called her his little sugar-plum, and assured her there were none but friends present. He then led her tottering across the room to Mrs. Harris. Amelia then fell upon her knees before her mother; but the doctor caught her up, saying, 'Use that posture, child, only to the Almighty!' but I need not mention this singularity of his to you who know him so well, and must have heard him often dispute against addressing ourselves to man in the humblest posture which we use towards the Supreme Being.

"I will tire you with no more particulars: we were soon satisfied that the doctor had reconciled us and our affairs to Mrs. Harris; and we now proceeded directly to church, the doctor having before provided a licence for us."

"But where is the strange accident?" cries Miss Matthews; "sure you have raised more curiosity than you have satisfied."

"Indeed, madam," answered he, "your reproof is just; I had like to have forgotten it; but you cannot wonder at me when you reflect on that interesting part of my story which I am now relating. — But before I mention this accident I must tell you what happened after Amelia's escape from her mother's house. Mrs. Harris at first ran out into the lane among her servants, and pursued us (so she imagined) along the road leading to the town; but that being very dirty, and a violent storm of rain coming, she took shelter in an alehouse about half a mile from her own house, whither she sent for her



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coach; she then drove, together with her daughter, to town, where, soon after her arrival, she sent for the doctor, her usual privy counsellor in all her affairs. They sat up all night together, the doctor endeavouring, by arguments and persuasions, to bring Mrs. Harris to reason; but all to no purpose, though, as he hath informed me, Miss Betty seconded him with the warmest entreaties."

Here Miss Matthews laughed; of which Booth begged to know the reason: she, at last, after many apologies, said, "It was the first good thing she ever heard of Miss Betty; nay," said she, "and asking your pardon for my opinion of your sister, since you will have it, I always conceived her to be the deepest of hypocrites."

Booth fetched a sigh, and said he was afraid she had not always acted so kindly;—and then, after a little hesitation, proceeded:

"You will be pleased, madam, to remember the lad was sent with a verbal message to the doctor: which message was no more than to acquaint him where we were, and to desire the favour of his company, or that he would send a coach to bring us to whatever place he would please to meet us at. This message was to be delivered to the doctor himself, and the messenger was ordered, if he found him not at home, to go to him wherever he was. He fulfilled his orders and told it to the doctor in the presence of Mrs. Harris."

"Oh, the idiot!" cries Miss Matthews. "Not at all," answered Booth: "he is a very sensible fellow, as you will, perhaps, say hereafter. He had not



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the least reason to suspect that any secrecy was necessary; for we took the utmost care he should not suspect it. — Well, madam, this accident, which appeared so unfortunate, turned in the highest degree to our advantage. Mrs. Harris no sooner heard the message delivered than she fell into the most violent passion imaginable, and accused the doctor of being in the plot, and of having confederated with me in the design of carrying off her daughter.

"The doctor, who had hitherto used only soothing methods, now talked in a different strain. He confessed the accusation and justified his conduct. He said he was no meddler in the family affairs of others, nor should he have concerned himself with hers, but at her own request; but that, since Mrs. Harris herself had made him an agent in this matter, he would take care to acquit himself with honour, and above all things to preserve a young lady for whom he had the highest esteem; 'for she is,' cries he, and, by heavens, he said true, 'the most worthy, generous, and noble of all human beings. You have yourself, madam,' said he, 'consented to the match. I have, at your request, made the match;' and then he added some particulars relating to his opinion of me, which my modesty forbids me to repeat." — "Nay, but," cries Miss Matthews, "I insist on your conquest of that modesty for once. We women do not love to hear one another's praises, and I will be made amends by hearing the praises of a man, and of a man whom, perhaps," added she with a leer, "I shall not think much the better of upon that ac-



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count." — "In obedience to your commands, then, madam," continued he, "the doctor was so kind to say he had enquired into my character and found that I had been a dutiful son and an affectionate brother. Relations, said he, in which whoever discharges his duty well, gives us a well-grounded hope that he will behave as properly in all the rest. He concluded with saying that Amelia's happiness, her heart, nay, her very reputation, were all concerned in this matter, to which, as he had been made instrumental, he was resolved to carry her through it; and then, taking the licence from his pocket, declared to Mrs. Harris that he would go that instant and marry her daughter wherever he found her. This speech, the doctor's voice, his look, and his behaviour, all which are sufficiently calculated to inspire awe, and even terror, when he pleases, frightened poor Mrs. Harris, and wrought a more sensible effect than it was in his power to produce by all his arguments and entreaties; and I have already related what followed.

"Thus the strange accident of our wanting pen, ink, and paper, and our not trusting the boy with our secret, occasioned the discovery to Mrs. Harris; that discovery put the doctor upon his metal, and produced that blessed event which I have recounted to you, and which, as my mother hath since confessed, nothing but the spirit which he had exerted after the discovery could have brought about.

"Well, madam, you now see me married to Amelia; in which situation you will, perhaps, think my happiness incapable of addition. Perhaps it was so; and yet I can with truth say that the love which



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I then bore Amelia was not comparable to what I bear her now." "Happy Amelia!" cried Miss Matthews. "If all men were like you, all women would be blessed; nay, the whole world would be so in a great measure; for, upon my soul, I believe that from the damned inconstancy of your sex to ours proceeds half the miseries of mankind."

That we may give the reader leisure to consider well the foregoing sentiment, we will here put an end to this chapter.



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## CHAPTER EIGHT

IN WHICH OUR READERS WILL PROBABLY BE DIVIDED IN THEIR OPINION OF MR. BOOTH'S CONDUCT.

BOOTH proceeded as follows: —

"The first months of our marriage produced nothing remarkable enough to mention. I am sure I need not tell Miss Matthews that I found in my Amelia every perfection of human nature. Mrs. Harris at first gave us some little uneasiness. She had rather yielded to the doctor than given a willing consent to the match; however, by degrees, she became more and more satisfied, and at last seemed perfectly reconciled. This we ascribed a good deal to the kind offices of Miss Betty, who had always appeared to be my friend. She had been greatly assisting to Amelia in making her escape, which I had no opportunity of mentioning to you before, and in all things behaved so well, outwardly at least, to myself as well as her sister, that we regarded her as our sincerest friend.

"About half a year after our marriage two additional companies were added to our regiment, in one of which I was preferred to the command of a lieutenant. Upon this occasion Miss Betty gave the first intimation of a disposition which we have since too severely experienced."



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"Your servant, sir," says Miss Matthews; "then I find I was not mistaken in my opinion of the lady. — No, no, shew me any goodness in a censorious prude, and — "

As Miss Matthews hesitated for a simile or an execration, Booth proceeded: "You will please to remember, madam, there was formerly an agreement between myself and Mrs. Harris that I should settle all my Amelia's fortune on her, except a certain sum, which was to be laid out in my advancement in the army; but, as our marriage was carried on in the manner you have heard, no such agreement was ever executed. And since I was become Amelia's husband not a word of this matter was ever mentioned by the old lady; and as for myself, I declare I had not yet awakened from that delicious dream of bliss in which the possession of Amelia had lulled me."

Here Miss Matthews sighed, and cast the tenderest of looks on Booth, who thus continued his story: —

"Soon after my promotion Mrs. Harris one morning took an occasion to speak to me on this affair. She said, that, as I had been promoted gratis to a lieutenancy, she would assist me with money to carry me yet a step higher; and, if more was required than was formerly mentioned, it should not be wanting, since she was so perfectly satisfied with my behaviour to her daughter. Adding that she hoped I had still the same inclination to settle on my wife the remainder of her fortune.

"I answered with very warm acknowledgments of my mother's goodness, and declared, if I had the world, I was ready to lay it at my Amelia's feet.



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— And so, Heaven knows, I would ten thousand worlds.

"Mrs. Harris seemed pleased with the warmth of my sentiments, and said she would immediately send to her lawyer and give him the necessary orders; and thus ended our conversation on this subject.

"From this time there was a very visible alteration in Miss Betty's behaviour. She grew reserved to her sister as well as to me. She was fretful and captious on the slightest occasion; nay, she affected much to talk on the ill consequences of an imprudent marriage, especially before her mother; and if ever any little tenderness or endearments escaped me in public towards Amelia, she never failed to make some malicious remark on the short duration of violent passions; and, when I have expressed a fond sentiment for my wife, her sister would kindly wish she might hear as much seven years hence.

"All these matters have been since suggested to us by reflection; for, while they actually past, both Amelia and myself had our thoughts too happily engaged to take notice of what discovered itself in the mind of any other person.

"Unfortunately for us, Mrs. Harris's lawyer happened at this time to be at London, where business detained him upwards of a month, and, as Mrs. Harris would on no occasion employ any other, our affair was under an entire suspension till his return.

"Amelia, who was now big with child, had often expressed the deepest concern at her apprehensions of my being some time commanded abroad; a circumstance, which she declared if it should ever happen to



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her, even though she should not then be in the same situation as at present, would infallibly break her heart. These remonstrances were made with such tenderness, and so much affected me, that, to avoid any probability of such an event, I endeavoured to get an exchange into the horse-guards, a body of troops which very rarely goes abroad, unless where the king himself commands in person. I soon found an officer for my purpose, the terms were agreed on, and Mrs. Harris had ordered the money which I was to pay to be ready, notwithstanding the opposition made by Miss Betty, who openly dissuaded her mother from it; alledging that the exchange was highly to my disadvantage; that I could never hope to rise in the army after it; not forgetting, at the same time, some insinuations very prejudicial to my reputation as a soldier.

"When everything was agreed on, and the two commissions were actually made out, but not signed by the king, one day, at my return from hunting, Amelia flew to me, and eagerly embracing me, cried out, 'O Billy, I have news for you which delights my soul. Nothing sure was ever so fortunate as the exchange you have made. The regiment you was formerly in is ordered for Gibraltar.'

"I received this news with far less transport than it was delivered. I answered coldly, since the case was so, I heartily hoped the commissions might be both signed. 'What do you say?' replied Amelia eagerly; 'sure you told me everything was entirely settled. That look of yours frightens me to death.' — But I am running into too minute particulars. In



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short, I received a letter by that very post from the officer with whom I had exchanged, insisting that, though his majesty had not signed the commissions, that still the bargain was valid, partly urging it as a right, and partly desiring it as a favour, that he might go to Gibraltar in my room.

"This letter convinced me in every point. I was now informed that the commissions were not signed, and consequently that the exchange was not compleated; of consequence the other could have no right to insist on going; and, as for granting him such a favour, I too clearly saw I must do it at the expense of my honour. I was now reduced to a dilemma, the most dreadful which I think any man can experience; in which, I am not ashamed to own, I found love was not so overmatched by honour as he ought to have been. The thoughts of leaving Amelia in her present condition to misery, perhaps to death or madness, were insupportable; nor could any other consideration but that which now tormented me on the other side have combated them a moment."

"No woman upon earth," cries Miss Matthews, "can despise want of spirit in a man more than myself; and yet I cannot help thinking you was rather too nice on this occasion."

"You will allow, madam," answered Booth, "that whoever offends against the laws of honour in the least instance is treated as the highest delinquent. Here is no excuse, no pardon; and he doth nothing who leaves anything undone. But if the conflict was so terrible with myself alone, what was my situation in the presence of Amelia? how could I support her



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sighs, her tears, her agonies, her despair? could I bear to think myself the cruel cause of her sufferings? for so I was: could I endure the thought of having it in my power to give her instant relief, for so it was, and refuse it her?

"Miss Betty was now again become my friend. She had scarce been civil to me for a fortnight last past, yet now she commended me to the skies, and as severely blamed her sister, whom she arraigned of the most contemptible weakness in preferring my safety to my honour: she said many ill-natured things on the occasion, which I shall not now repeat.

"In the midst of this hurricane the good doctor came to dine with Mrs. Harris, and at my desire delivered his opinion on the matter."

Here Mr. Booth was interrupted in his narrative by the arrival of a person whom we shall introduce in the next chapter.



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## CHAPTER NINE

CONTAINING A SCENE OF A DIFFERENT KIND FROM ANY OF THE PRECEDING.

THE gentleman who now arrived was the keeper; or, if you please (for so he pleased to call himself), the governor of the prison.

He used so little ceremony at his approach, that the bolt, which was very slight on the inside, gave way, and the door immediately flew open. He had no sooner entered the room than he acquainted Miss Matthews that he had brought her very good news, for which he demanded a bottle of wine as his due.

This demand being complied with, he acquainted Miss Matthews that the wounded gentleman was not dead, nor was his wound thought to be mortal: that loss of blood, and perhaps his fright, had occasioned his fainting away; "but I believe, madam," said he, "if you take the proper measures you may be bailed to-morrow. I expect the lawyer here this evening, and if you put the business into his hands I warrant it will be done. Money to be sure must be parted with, that 's to be sure. People to be sure will expect to touch a little in such cases. For my own part, I never desire to keep a prisoner longer than the law allows, not I; I always inform them they can be



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bailed as soon as I know it; I never make any bargain, not I; I always love to leave those things to the gentlemen and ladies themselves. I never suspect gentlemen and ladies of wanting generosity."

Miss Matthews made a very slight answer to all these friendly professions. She said she had done nothing she repented of, and was indifferent as to the event. "All I can say," cries she, "is, that if the wretch is alive there is no greater villain in life than himself;" and, instead of mentioning anything of the bail, she begged the keeper to leave her again alone with Mr. Booth. The keeper replied, "Nay, madam, perhaps it may be better to stay a little longer here, if you have not bail ready, than to buy them too dear. Besides, a day or two hence, when the gentleman is past all danger of recovery, to be sure some folks that would expect an extraordinary fee now cannot expect to touch anything. And to be sure you shall want nothing here. The best of all things are to be had here for money, both eatable and drinkable: though I say it, I shan't turn my back to any of the taverns for either eatables or wind. The captain there need not have been so shy of owning himself when he first came in; we have had captains and other great gentlemen here before now; and no shame to them, though I say it. Many a great gentleman is sometimes found in places that don't become them half so well, let me tell them that, Captain Booth, let me tell them that."

"I see, sir," answered Booth, a little discomposed, "that you are acquainted with my title as well as my name."



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"Ay, sir," cries the keeper, "and I honour you the more for it. I love the gentlemen of the army. I was in the army myself formerly; in the Lord of Oxford's horse. It is true I rode private; but I had money enough to have bought in quarter-master, when I took it into my head to marry, and my wife she did not like that I should continue a soldier, she was all for a private life; and so I came to this business."

"Upon my word, sir," answered Booth, "you consulted your wife's inclinations very notably; but pray will you satisfy my curiosity in telling me how you became acquainted that I was in the army? for my dress I think could not betray me."

"Betray!" replied the keeper; "there is no betraying here, I hope — I am not a person to betray people. — But you are so shy and peery, you would almost make one suspect there was more in the matter. And if there be, I promise you, you need not be afraid of telling it me. You will excuse me giving you a hint; but the sooner the better, that's all. Others may be beforehand with you, and first come first served on these occasions, that's all. Informers are odious, there's no doubt of that, and no one would care to be an informer if he could help it, because of the ill-usage they always receive from the mob: yet it is dangerous to trust too much; and when safety and a good part of the reward too are on one side and the gallows on the other — I know which a wise man would chuse."

"What the devil do you mean by all this?" cries Booth.



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"No offence, I hope," answered the keeper: "I speak for your good; and if you have been upon the snaffling lay — you understand me, I am sure."

"Not I," answered Booth, "upon my honour."

"Nay, nay," replied the keeper, with a contemptuous sneer, "if you are so peery as that comes to, you must take the consequence. — But for my part, I know I would not trust Robinson with twopence untold."

"What do you mean?" cries Booth; "who is Robinson?"

"And you don't know Robinson?" answered the keeper with great emotion. To which Booth replying in the negative, the keeper, after some tokens of amazement, cried out, "Well, captain, I must say you are the best at it of all the gentlemen I ever saw. However, I will tell you this: the lawyer and Mr. Robinson have been laying their heads together about you above half an hour this afternoon. I overheard them mention Captain Booth several times, and, for my part, I would not answer that Mr. Murphy is not now gone about the business; but if you will impeach any to me of the road, or anything else, I will step away to his worship Thrasher this instant, and I am sure I have interest enough with him to get you admitted an evidence."

"And so," cries Booth, "you really take me for a highwayman?"

"No offence, captain, I hope," said the keeper; "as times go, there are many worse men in the world than those. Gentlemen may be driven to distress, and when they are, I know no more gen-



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teeler way than the road. It hath been many a brave man's case, to my knowledge, and men of as much honour too as any in the world."

"Well, sir," said Booth, "I assure you I am not that gentleman of honour you imagine me."

Miss Matthews, who had long understood the keeper no better than Mr. Booth, no sooner heard his meaning explained than she was fired with greater indignation than the gentleman had expressed. "How dare you, sir," said she to the keeper, "insult a man of fashion, and who hath had the honour to bear his majesty's commission in the army? as you yourself own you know. If his misfortunes have sent him hither, sure we have no laws that will protect such a fellow as you in insulting him." "Fellow!" muttered the keeper — "I would not advise you, madam, to use such language to me." — "Do you dare threaten me?" replied Miss Matthews in a rage. "Venture in the least instance to exceed your authority with regard to me, and I will prosecute you with the utmost vengeance."

A scene of very high altercation now ensued, till Booth interposed and quieted the keeper, who was, perhaps, enough inclined to an accommodation; for, in truth, he waged unequal war. He was besides unwilling to incense Miss Matthews, whom he expected to be bailed out the next day, and who had more money left than he intended she should carry out of the prison with her; and as for any violent or unjustifiable methods, the lady had discovered much too great a spirit to be in danger of them. The governor, therefore, in a very gentle tone, declared that, if he



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had given any offence to the gentleman, he heartily asked his pardon; that, if he had known him to be really a captain, he should not have entertained any such suspicions; but the captain was a very common title in that place, and belonged to several gentlemen that had never been in the army, or, at most, had rid private like himself. "To be sure, captain," said he, "as you yourself own, your dress is not very military" (for he had on a plain fustian suit); "and besides, as the lawyer says, *noscitur a sosir*, is a very good rule. And I don't believe there is a greater rascal upon earth than that same Robinson that I was talking of. Nay, I assure you, I wish there may be no mischief hatching against you. But if there is I will do all I can with the lawyer to prevent it. To be sure, Mr. Murphy is one of the cleverest men in the world at the law; that even his enemies must own, and as I recommend him to all the business I can (and it is not a little to be sure that arises in this place), why one good turn deserves another. And I may expect that he will not be concerned in any plot to ruin any friend of mine, at least when I desire him not. I am sure he could not be an honest man if he would."

Booth was then satisfied that Mr. Robinson, whom he did not yet know by name, was the gamester who had won his money at play. And now Miss Matthews, who had very impatiently borne this long interruption, prevailed on the keeper to withdraw. As soon as he was gone Mr. Booth began to felicitate her upon the news of the wounded gentleman being in a fair likelihood of recovery. To which, after a



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short silence, she answered, "There is something, perhaps, which you will not easily guess, that makes your congratulations more agreeable to me than the first account I heard of the villain's having escaped the fate he deserves; for I do assure you, at first, it did not make me amends for the interruption of my curiosity. Now I hope we shall be disturbed no more till you have finished your whole story. — You left off, I think, somewhere in the struggle about leaving Amelia — the happy Amelia." "And can you call her happy at such a period?" cries Booth. "Happy, ay, happy, in any situation," answered Miss Matthews, "with such a husband. I, at least, may well think so, who have experienced the very reverse of her fortune; but I was not born to be happy. I may say with the poet,

> "The blackest ink of fate was sure my lot,
> And when fate writ my name, it made a blot."

"Nay, nay, dear Miss Matthews," answered Booth, "you must and shall banish such gloomy thoughts. Fate hath, I hope, many happy days in store for you."— "Do you believe it, Mr. Booth?" replied she; "indeed you know the contrary — you must know — for you can't have forgot. No Amelia in the world can have quite obliterated — forgetfulness is not in our own power. If it was, indeed, I have reason to think — but I know not what I am saying. — Pray do proceed in that story."

Booth so immediately complied with this request that it is possible he was pleased with it. To say the truth, if all which unwittingly dropt from Miss



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Matthews was put together, some conclusions might, it seems, be drawn from the whole, which could not convey a very agreeable idea to a constant husband. Booth, therefore, proceeded to relate what is written in the third book of this history.



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# BOOK III

## CHAPTER ONE

### IN WHICH MR. BOOTH RESUMES HIS STORY.

IF I am not mistaken, madam," continued Booth, "I was just going to acquaint you with the doctor's opinion when we were interrupted by the keeper.

"The doctor, having heard counsel on both sides, that is to say, Mrs. Harris for my staying, and Miss Betty for my going, at last delivered his own sentiments. As for Amelia, she sat silent, drowned in her tears; nor was I myself in a much better situation.

"'As the commissions are not signed,' said the doctor, 'I think you may be said to remain in your former regiment; and therefore I think you ought to go on this expedition; your duty to your king and country, whose bread you have eaten, requires it; and this is a duty of too high a nature to admit the least deficiency. Regard to your character, likewise, requires you to go; for the world, which might justly blame your staying at home if the case was even fairly stated, will not deal so honestly by you: you must expect to have every circumstance against you heightened, and most of what makes for your defence omitted; and thus you will be stig-



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matized as a coward without any palliation. As the malicious disposition of mankind is too well known, and the cruel pleasure which they take in destroying the reputations of others, the use we are to make of this knowledge is to afford no handle to reproach; for, bad as the world is, it seldom falls on any man who hath not given some slight cause for censure, though this, perhaps, is often aggravated ten thousand-fold; and, when we blame the malice of the aggravation we ought not to forget our own imprudence in giving the occasion. Remember, my boy, your honour is at stake; and you know how nice the honour of a soldier is in these cases. This is a treasure which he must be your enemy, indeed, who would attempt to rob you of. Therefore, you ought to consider every one as your enemy who, by desiring you to stay, would rob you of your honour.'

"'Do you hear that, sister?' cries Miss Betty.—'Yes, I do hear it,' answered Amelia, with more spirit than I ever saw her exert before, 'and would preserve his honour at the expense of my life. I will preserve it if it should be at that expense; and since it is Dr. Harrison's opinion that he ought to go, I give my consent. Go, my dear husband,' cried she, falling upon her knees: 'may every angel of heaven guard and preserve you!'—I cannot repeat her words without being affected," said he, wiping his eyes, "the excellence of that woman no words can paint: Miss Matthews, she hath every perfection in human nature.

"I will not tire you with the repetition of any



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more that past on that occasion, nor with the quarrel that ensued between Mrs. Harris and the doctor; for the old lady could not submit to my leaving her daughter in her present condition. She fell severely on the army, and cursed the day in which her daughter was married to a soldier, not sparing the doctor for having had some share in the match. I will omit, likewise, the tender scene which past between Amelia and myself previous to my departure."

"Indeed, I beg you would not," cries Miss Matthews; "nothing delights me more than scenes of tenderness. I should be glad to know, if possible, every syllable which was uttered on both sides."

"I will indulge you then," cries Booth, "as far as is in my power. Indeed, I believe I am able to recollect much the greatest part; for the impression is never to be effaced from my memory."

He then proceeded as Miss Matthews desired; but, lest all our readers should not be of her opinion, we will, according to our usual custom, endeavour to accommodate ourselves to every taste, and shall, therefore, place this scene in a chapter by itself, which we desire all our readers who do not love, or who, perhaps, do not know the pleasure of tenderness, to pass over; since they may do this without any prejudice to the thread of the narrative.



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## CHAPTER TWO

CONTAINING A SCENE OF THE TENDER KIND.

"THE doctor, madam," continued Booth, "spent his evening at Mrs. Harris's house, where I sat with him whilst he smoaked his pillow pipe, as his phrase is. Amelia was retired about half an hour to her chamber before I went to her. At my entrance I found her on her knees, a posture in which I never disturbed her. In a few minutes she arose, came to me, and embracing me, said she had been praying for resolution to support the cruellest moment she had ever undergone or could possibly undergo. I reminded her how much more bitter a farewel would be on a death-bed, when we never could meet, in this world at least, again. I then endeavoured to lessen all those objects which alarmed her most, and particularly the danger I was to encounter, upon which head I seemed a little to comfort her; but the probable length of my absence and the certain length of my voyage were circumstances which no oratory of mine could even palliate. 'O heavens!' said she, bursting into tears, 'can I bear to think that hundreds, thousands for aught I know, of miles or leagues, that lands and seas are between us? What is the prospect from that mount in our garden where I have sat so many happy hours with



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my Billy? what is the distance between that and the farthest hill which we see from thence compared to the distance which will be between us? You cannot wonder at this idea; you must remember, my Billy, at this place, this very thought came formerly into my foreboding mind. I then begged you to leave the army. Why would you not comply? — did I not tell you then that the smallest cottage we could survey from the mount would be, with you, a paradise to me? it would be so still — why can't my Billy think so? am I so much his superior in love? where is the dishonour, Billy? or, if there be any, will it reach our ears in our little hut? are glory and fame, and not his Amelia, the happiness of my husband? go then, purchase them at my expence. You will pay a few sighs, perhaps a few tears, at parting, and then new scenes will drive away the thoughts of poor Amelia from your bosom; but what assistance shall I have in my affliction? not that any change of scene could drive you one moment from my remembrance; yet here every object I behold will place your loved idea in the liveliest manner before my eyes. This is the bed in which you have reposed; that is the chair on which you sat. Upon these boards you have stood. These books you have read to me. Can I walk among our beds of flowers without viewing your favourites, nay, those which you have planted with your own hands? can I see one beauty from our beloved mount which you have not pointed out to me?' — Thus she went on, the woman, madam, you see, still prevailing." — "Since you mention it,"



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says Miss Matthews, with a smile, "I own the same observation occurred to me. It is too natural to us to consider ourselves only, Mr. Booth." — "You shall hear," he cried. "At last the thoughts of her present condition suggested themselves. — 'But if,' said she, 'my situation, even in health, will be so intolerable, how shall I, in the danger and agonies of childbirth, support your absence?' — Here she stopt, and, looking on me with all the tenderness imaginable, cried out, 'And am I then such a wretch to wish for your presence at such a season? ought I not to rejoice that you are out of the hearing of my cries or the knowledge of my pains? if I die, will you not have escaped the horrors of a parting ten thousand times more dreadful than this? Go, go, my Billy; the very circumstance which made me most dread your departure hath perfectly reconciled me to it. I perceive clearly now that I was only wishing to support my own weakness with your strength, and to relieve my own pains at the price of yours. Believe me, my love, I am ashamed of myself.' — I caught her in my arms with raptures not to be exprest in words, called her my heroine; sure none ever better deserved that name; after which we remained for some time speechless, and locked in each other's embraces." — "I am convinced," said Miss Matthews, with a sigh, "there are moments in life worth purchasing with worlds."

"At length the fatal morning came. I endeavoured to hide every pang of my heart, and to wear the utmost gaiety in my countenance. Amelia acted the same part. In these assumed characters we



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met the family at breakfast; at their breakfast, I mean, for we were both full already. The doctor had spent above an hour that morning in discourse with Mrs. Harris, and had, in some measure, reconciled her to my departure. He now made use of every art to relieve the poor distressed Amelia; not by inveighing against the folly of grief, or by seriously advising her not to grieve; both of which were sufficiently performed by Miss Betty. The doctor, on the contrary, had recourse to every means which might cast a veil over the idea of grief, and raise comfortable images in my angel's mind. He endeavoured to lessen the supposed length of my absence by discoursing on matters which were more distant in time. He said he intended next year to rebuild a part of his parsonage-house. 'And you, captain,' says he, 'shall lay the corner-stone, I promise you:' with many other instances of the like nature, which produced, I believe, some good effect on us both.

"Amelia spoke but little; indeed, more tears than words dropt from her; however, she seemed resolved to bear her affliction with resignation. But when the dreadful news arrived that the horses were ready, and I, having taken my leave of all the rest, at last approached her, she was unable to support the conflict with nature any longer, and, clinging round my neck, she cried, 'Farewel, farewel for ever; for I shall never, never see you more.' At which words the blood entirely forsook her lovely cheeks, and she became a lifeless corpse in my arms.

"Amelia continued so long motionless, that the doctor, as well as Mrs. Harris, began to be under



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the most terrible apprehensions; so they informed me afterwards, for at that time I was incapable of making any observation. I had indeed very little more use of my senses than the dear creature whom I supported. At length, however, we were all delivered from our fears; and life again visited the loveliest mansion that human nature ever afforded it.

"I had been, and yet was, so terrified with what had happened, and Amelia continued yet so weak and ill, that I determined, whatever might be the consequence, not to leave her that day; which resolution she was no sooner acquainted with than she fell on her knees, crying, 'Good Heaven! I thank thee for this reprieve at least. Oh! that every hour of my future life could be crammed into this dear day!'

"Our good friend the doctor remained with us. He said he had intended to visit a family in some affliction; 'but I don't know,' says he, 'why I should ride a dozen miles after affliction, when we have enough here." Of all mankind the doctor is the best of comforters. As his excessive good-nature makes him take vast delight in the office, so his great penetration into the human mind, joined to his great experience, renders him the most wonderful proficient in it; and he so well knows when to soothe, when to reason, and when to ridicule, that he never applies any of those arts improperly, which is almost universally the case with the physicians of the mind, and which it requires very great judgment and dexterity to avoid.

"The doctor principally applied himself to ridi-



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culing the dangers of the siege, in which he succeeded so well, that he sometimes forced a smile even into the face of Amelia. But what most comforted her were the arguments he used to convince her of the probability of my speedy if not immediate return. He said the general opinion was that the place would be taken before our arrival there; in which case we should have nothing more to do than to make the best of our way home again.

"Amelia was so lulled by these arts that she passed the day much better than I expected. Though the doctor could not make pride strong enough to conquer love, yet he exalted the former to make some stand against the latter; insomuch that my poor Amelia, I believe, more than once flattered herself, to speak the language of the world, that her reason had gained an entire victory over her passion; till love brought up a reinforcement, if I may use that term, of tender ideas, and bore down all before him.

"In the evening the doctor and I passed another half-hour together, when he proposed to me to endeavour to leave Amelia asleep in the morning, and promised me to be at hand when she awaked, and to support her with all the assistance in his power. He added that nothing was more foolish than for friends to take leave of each other. 'It is true, indeed,' says he, 'in the common acquaintance and friendship of the world, this is a very harmless ceremony; but between two persons who really love each other the church of Rome never invented a penance half so severe as this which we absurdly impose on ourselves.'

"I greatly approved the doctor's proposal; thanked



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him, and promised, if possible, to put it in execution. He then shook me by the hand, and heartily wished me well, saying, in his blunt way, 'Well, boy, I hope to see thee crowned with laurels at thy return; one comfort I have at least, that stone walls and a sea will prevent thee from running away.'

"When I had left the doctor I repaired to my Amelia, whom I found in her chamber, employed in a very different manner from what she had been the preceding night; she was busy in packing up some trinkets in a casket, which she desired me to carry with me. This casket was her own work, and she had just fastened it as I came to her.

"Her eyes very plainly discovered what had passed while she was engaged in her work: however, her countenance was now serene, and she spoke, at least, with some chearfulness. But after some time, 'You must take care of this casket, Billy,' said she. 'You must, indeed, Billy — for —' here passion almost choaked her, till a flood of tears gave her relief, and then she proceeded — 'For I shall be the happiest woman that ever was born when I see it again.' I told her, with the blessing of God, that day would soon come. 'Soon!' answered she. 'No, Billy, not soon: a week is an age; — but yet the happy day may come. It shall, it must, it will! Yes, Billy, we shall meet never to part again, even in this world, I hope.' Pardon my weakness, Miss Matthews, but upon my soul I cannot help it," cried he, wiping his eyes. "Well, I wonder at your patience, and I will try it no longer. Amelia, tired out with so long a struggle between variety of passions, and having not



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closed her eyes during three successive nights, towards the morning fell into a profound sleep. In which sleep I left her, and, having drest myself with all the expedition imaginable, singing, whistling, hurrying, attempting by every method to banish thought, I mounted my horse, which I had over-night ordered to be ready, and galloped away from that house where all my treasure was deposited.

"Thus, madam, I have, in obedience to your commands, run through a scene which, if it hath been tiresome to you, you must yet acquit me of having obtruded upon you. This I am convinced of, that no one is capable of tasting such a scene who hath not a heart full of tenderness, and perhaps not even then, unless he hath been in the same situation."



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## CHAPTER THREE

IN WHICH MR. BOOTH SETS FORWARD ON HIS JOURNEY.

WELL, madam, we have now taken our leave of Amelia. I rode a full mile before I once suffered myself to look back; but now being come to the top of a little hill, the last spot I knew which could give me a prospect of Mrs. Harris's house, my resolution failed: I stopped and cast my eyes backward. Shall I tell you what I felt at that instant? I do assure you I am not able. So many tender ideas crouded at once into my mind, that, if I may use the expression, they almost dissolved my heart. And now, madam, the most unfortunate accident came first into my head. This was, that I had in the hurry and confusion left the dear casket behind me. The thought of going back at first suggested itself; but the consequences of that were too apparent. I therefore resolved to send my man, and in the meantime to ride on softly on my road. He immediately executed my orders, and after some time, feeding my eyes with that delicious and yet heartfelt prospect, I at last turned my horse to descend the hill, and proceeded about a hundred yards, when, considering with myself that I should lose no time by a second indulgence, I again turned back, and once more feasted my sight with



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the same painful pleasure till my man returned, bringing me the casket, and an account that Amelia still continued in the sweet sleep I left her. I now suddenly turned my horse for the last time, and with the utmost resolution pursued my journey.

"I perceived my man at his return — But before I mention anything of him it may be proper, madam, to acquaint you who he was. He was the foster-brother of my Amelia. This young fellow had taken it into his head to go into the army; and he was desirous to serve under my command. The doctor consented to discharge him; his mother at last yielded to his importunities, and I was very easily prevailed on to list one of the handsomest young fellows in England.

"You will easily believe I had some little partiality to one whose milk Amelia had sucked; but, as he had never seen the regiment, I had no opportunity to shew him any great mark of favour. Indeed he waited on me as my servant; and I treated him with all the tenderness which can be used to one in that station.

"When I was about to change into the horse-guards the poor fellow began to droop, fearing that he should no longer be in the same corps with me, though certainly that would not have been the case. However, he had never mentioned one word of his dissatisfaction. He is indeed a fellow of a noble spirit; but when he heard that I was to remain where I was, and that we were to go to Gibraltar together, he fell into transports of joy little short of madness. In short, the poor fellow had imbibed a



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very strong affection for me; though this was what I knew nothing of till long after.

"When he returned to me then, as I was saying, with the casket, I observed his eyes all over blubbered with tears. I rebuked him a little too rashly on this occasion. 'Heyday!' says I, 'what is the meaning of this? I hope I have not a milk-sop with me. If I thought you would shew such a face to the enemy I would leave you behind.'—'Your honour need not fear that,' answered he; 'I shall find nobody there that I shall love well enough to make me cry.' I was highly pleased with this answer, in which I thought I could discover both sense and spirit. I then asked him what had occasioned those tears since he had left me (for he had no sign of any at that time), and whether he had seen his mother at Mrs. Harris's? He answered in the negative, and begged that I would ask him no more questions; adding that he was not very apt to cry, and he hoped he should never give me such another opportunity of blaming him. I mention this only as an instance of his affection towards me; for I never could account for those tears any otherwise than by placing them to the account of that distress in which he left me at that time. We travelled full forty miles that day without baiting, when, arriving at the inn where I intended to rest that night, I retired immediately to my chamber, with my dear Amelia's casket, the opening of which was the nicest repast, and to which every other hunger gave way.

"It is impossible to mention to you all the little matters with which Amelia had furnished this cas-



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ket. It contained medicines of all kinds, which her mother, who was the Lady Bountiful of that country, had supplied her with. The most valuable of all to me was a lock of her dear hair, which I have from that time to this worn in my bosom. What would I have then given for a little picture of my dear angel, which she had lost from her chamber about a month before! and which we had the highest reason in the world to imagine her sister had taken away; for the suspicion lay only between her and Amelia's maid, who was of all creatures the honestest, and whom her mistress had often trusted with things of much greater value; for the picture, which was set in gold, and had two or three little diamonds round it, was worth about twelve guineas only; whereas Amelia left jewels in her care of much greater value."

"Sure," cries Miss Matthews, "she could not be such a paultry pilferer."

"Not on account of the gold or the jewels," cries Booth. "We imputed it to mere spite, with which, I assure you, she abounds; and she knew that, next to Amelia herself, there was nothing which I valued so much as this little picture; for such a resemblance did it bear of the original, that Hogarth himself did never, I believe, draw a stronger likeness. Spite, therefore, was the only motive to this cruel depredation; and indeed her behaviour on the occasion sufficiently convinced us both of the justice of our suspicion, though we neither of us durst accuse her; and she herself had the assurance to insist very strongly (though she could not prevail) with Amelia



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to turn away her innocent maid, saying, she would not live in the house with a thief."

Miss Matthews now discharged some curses on Miss Betty, not much worth repeating, and then Mr. Booth proceeded in his relation.



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## CHAPTER FOUR

### A SEA PIECE.

THE next day we joined the regiment, which was soon after to embark. Nothing but mirth and jollity were in the countenance of every officer and soldier; and as I now met several friends whom I had not seen for above a year before, I passed several happy hours, in which poor Amelia's image seldom obtruded itself to interrupt my pleasure. To confess the truth, dear Miss Matthews, the tenderest of passions is capable of subsiding; nor is absence from our dearest friends so unsupportable as it may at first appear. Distance of time and place do really cure what they seem to aggravate; and taking leave of our friends resembles taking leave of the world; concerning which it hath been often said that it is not death, but dying, which is terrible." — Here Miss Matthews burst into a fit of laughter, and cried, "I sincerely ask your pardon; but I cannot help laughing at the gravity of your philosophy." Booth answered, That the doctrine of the passions had been always his favourite study; that he was convinced every man acted entirely from that passion which was uppermost. "Can I then think," said he, "without entertaining the utmost contempt for my-



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self, that any pleasure upon earth could drive the thoughts of Amelia one instant from my mind?

"At length we embarked aboard a transport, and sailed for Gibraltar; but the wind, which was at first fair, soon chopped about; so that we were obliged, for several days, to beat to windward, as the sea phrase is. During this time the taste which I had of a seafaring life did not appear extremely agreeable. We rolled up and down in a little narrow cabbin, in which were three officers, all of us extremely sea-sick; our sickness being much aggravated by the motion of the ship, by the view of each other, and by the stench of the men. But this was but a little taste indeed of the misery which was to follow; for we were got about six leagues to the westward of Scilly, when a violent storm arose at north-east, which soon raised the waves to the height of mountains. The horror of this is not to be adequately described to those who have never seen the like. The storm began in the evening, and, as the clouds brought on the night apace, it was soon entirely dark; nor had we, during many hours, any other light than what was caused by the jarring elements, which frequently sent forth flashes, or rather streams of fire; and whilst these presented the most dreadful objects to our eyes, the roaring of the winds, the dashing of the waves against the ship and each other, formed a sound altogether as horrible for our ears; while our ship, sometimes lifted up, as it were, to the skies, and sometimes swept away at once as into the lowest abyss, seemed to be the sport of the winds and seas. The captain



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himself almost gave up all for lost, and exprest his apprehension of being inevitably cast on the rocks of Scilly, and beat to pieces. And now, while some on board were addressing themselves to the Supreme Being, and others applying for comfort to strong liquors, my whole thoughts were entirely engaged by my Amelia. A thousand tender ideas crouded into my mind. I can truly say that I had not a single consideration about myself in which she was not concerned. Dying to me was leaving her; and the fear of never seeing her more was a dagger stuck in my heart. Again, all the terrors with which this storm, if it reached her ears, must fill her gentle mind on my account, and the agonies which she must undergo when she heard of my fate, gave me such intolerable pangs, that I now repented my resolution, and wished, I own I wished, that I had taken her advice, and preferred love and a cottage to all the dazzling charms of honour.

"While I was tormenting myself with those meditations, and had concluded myself as certainly lost, the master came into the cabbin, and with a chearful voice assured us that we had escaped the danger, and that we had certainly past to westward of the rock. This was comfortable news to all present; and my captain, who had been some time on his knees, leapt suddenly up, and testified his joy with a great oath.

"A person unused to the sea would have been astonished at the satisfaction which now discovered itself in the master or in any on board; for the storm still raged with great violence, and the day-



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light, which now appeared, presented us with sights of horror sufficient to terrify minds which were not absolute slaves to the passion of fear; but so great is the force of habit, that what inspires a landsman with the highest apprehension of danger gives not the least concern to a sailor, to whom rocks and quicksands are almost the only objects of terror.

"The master, however, was a little mistaken in the present instance; for he had not left the cabbin above an hour before my man came running to me, and acquainted me that the ship was half full of water; that the sailors were going to hoist out the boat and save themselves, and begged me to come that moment along with him, as I tendered my preservation. With this account, which was conveyed to me in a whisper, I acquainted both the captain and ensign; and we all together immediately mounted the deck, where we found the master making use of all his oratory to persuade the sailors that the ship was in no danger; and at the same time employing all his authority to set the pumps a-going, which he assured them would keep the water under, and save his dear Lovely Peggy (for that was the name of the ship), which he swore he loved as dearly as his own soul.

"Indeed this sufficiently appeared; for the leak was so great, and the water flowed in so plentifully, that his Lovely Peggy was half filled before he could be brought to think of quitting her; but now the boat was brought alongside the ship, and the master himself, notwithstanding all his love for her, quitted his ship, and leapt into the boat. Every



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man present attempted to follow his example, when I heard the voice of my servant roaring forth my name in a kind of agony. I made directly to the ship-side, but was too late; for the boat, being already overladen, put directly off. And now, madam, I am going to relate to you an instance of heroic affection in a poor fellow towards his master, to which love itself, even among persons of superior education, can produce but few similar instances. My poor man, being unable to get me with him into the boat, leapt suddenly into the sea, and swam back to the ship; and, when I gently rebuked him for his rashness, he answered, he chose rather to die with me than to live to carry the account of my death to my Amelia: at the same time bursting into a flood of tears, he cried, 'Good Heavens! what will that poor lady feel when she hears of this!' This tender concern for my dear love endeared the poor fellow more to me than the gallant instance which he had just before given of his affection towards myself.

"And now, madam, my eyes were shocked with a sight, the horror of which can scarce be imagined; for the boat had scarce got four hundred yards from the ship when it was swallowed up by the merciless waves, which now ran so high, that out of the number of persons which were in the boat none recovered the ship, though many of them we saw miserably perish before our eyes, some of them very near us, without any possibility of giving them the least assistance.

"But, whatever we felt for them, we felt, I be-



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lieve, more for ourselves, expecting every minute when we should share the same fate. Amongst the rest, one of our officers appeared quite stupified with fear. I never, indeed, saw a more miserable example of the great power of that passion: I must not, however, omit doing him justice, by saying that I afterwards saw the same man behave well in an engagement, in which he was wounded; though there likewise he was said to have betrayed the same passion of fear in his countenance.

"The other of our officers was no less stupified (if I may so express myself) with fool-hardiness, and seemed almost insensible of his danger. To say the truth, I have, from this and some other instances which I have seen, been almost inclined to think that the courage as well as cowardice of fools proceeds from not knowing what is or what is not the proper object of fear; indeed, we may account for the extreme hardiness of some men in the same manner as for the terrors of children at a bugbear. The child knows not but that the bugbear is the proper object of fear, the blockhead knows not that a cannon-ball is so.

"As to the remaining part of the ship's crew and the soldiery, most of them were dead drunk, and the rest were endeavouring, as fast as they could, to prepare for death in the same manner.

"In this dreadful situation we were taught that no human condition should inspire men with absolute despair; for, as the storm had ceased for some time, the swelling of the sea began considerably to abate; and we now perceived the man of war which



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convoyed us, at no great distance astern. Those aboard her easily perceived our distress, and made towards us. When they came pretty near they hoisted out two boats to our assistance. These no sooner approached the ship than they were instantaneously filled, and I myself got a place in one of them, chiefly by the aid of my honest servant, of whose fidelity to me on all occasions I cannot speak or think too highly. Indeed, I got into the boat so much the more easily, as a great number on board the ship were rendered, by drink, incapable of taking any care for themselves. There was time, however, for the boat to pass and repass; so that, when we came to call over names, three only, of all that remained in the ship after the loss of her own boat, were missing.

"The captain, ensign, and myself, were received with many congratulations by our officers on board the man of war. — The sea-officers too, all except the captain, paid us their compliments, though these were of the rougher kind, and not without several jokes on our escape. As for the captain himself, we scarce saw him during many hours; and, when he appeared, he presented a view of majesty beyond any that I had ever seen. The dignity which he preserved did indeed give me rather the idea of a Mogul, or a Turkish emperor, than of any of the monarchs of Christendom. To say the truth, I could resemble his walk on the deck to nothing but the image of Captain Gulliver strutting among the Lilliputians; he seemed to think himself a being of an order superior to all around him, and more espe-



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cially to us of the land service. Nay, such was the behaviour of all the sea-officers and sailors to us and our soldiers, that, instead of appearing to be subjects of the same prince, engaged in one quarrel, and joined to support one cause, we land-men rather seemed to be captives on board an enemy's vessel. This is a grievous misfortune, and often proves so fatal to the service, that it is great pity some means could not be found of curing it."

Here Mr. Booth stopt a while to take breath. We will therefore give the same refreshment to the reader.



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## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE ARRIVAL OF BOOTH AT GIBRALTAR, WITH WHAT THERE BEFEL HIM.

"THE adventures," continued Booth, "which happened to me from this day till my arrival at Gibraltar are not worth recounting to you. After a voyage the remainder of which was tolerably prosperous, we arrived in that garrison, the natural strength of which is so well known to the whole world.

"About a week after my arrival it was my fortune to be ordered on a sally party, in which my left leg was broke with a musket-ball; and I should most certainly have either perished miserably, or must have owed my preservation to some of the enemy, had not my faithful servant carried me off on his shoulders, and afterwards, with the assistance of one of his comrades, brought me back into the garrison.

"The agony of my wound was so great, that it threw me into a fever, from whence my surgeon apprehended much danger. I now began again to feel for my Amelia, and for myself on her account; and the disorder of my mind, occasioned by such melancholy contemplations, very highly aggravated the distemper of my body; insomuch that it would probably



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have proved fatal, had it not been for the friendship of one Captain James, an officer of our regiment, and an old acquaintance, who is undoubtedly one of the pleasantest companions and one of the best-natured men in the world. This worthy man, who had a head and a heart perfectly adequate to every office of friendship, stayed with me almost day and night during my illness; and by strengthening my hopes, raising my spirits, and cheering my thoughts, preserved me from destruction.

"The behaviour of this man alone is a sufficient proof of the truth of my doctrine, that all men act entirely from their passions; for Bob James can never be supposed to act from any motives of virtue or religion, since he constantly laughs at both; and yet his conduct towards me alone demonstrates a degree of goodness which, perhaps, few of the votaries of either virtue or religion can equal."

"You need not take much pains," answered Miss Matthews, with a smile, "to convince me of your doctrine. I have been always an advocate for the same. I look upon the two words you mention to serve only as cloaks, under which hypocrisy may be the better enabled to cheat the world. I have been of that opinion ever since I read that charming fellow Mandevil."

"Pardon me, madam," answered Booth; "I hope you do not agree with Mandevil neither, who hath represented human nature in a picture of the highest deformity. He hath left out of his system the best passion which the mind can possess, and attempts to derive the effects or energies of that passion from



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the base impulses of pride or fear. Whereas it is as certain that love exists in the mind of man as that its opposite hatred doth; and the same reasons will equally prove the existence of the one as the existence of the other."

"I don't know, indeed," replied the lady, "I never thought much about the matter. This I know, that when I read Mandevil I thought all he said was true; and I have been often told that he proves religion and virtue to be only mere names. However, if he denies there is any such thing as love, that is most certainly wrong. — I am afraid I can give him the lye myself."

"I will join with you, madam, in that," answered Booth, "at any time."

"Will you join with me?" answered she, looking eagerly at him — "O, Mr. Booth! I know not what I was going to say — What — Where did you leave off? — I would not interrupt you — but I am impatient to know something."

"What, madam?" cries Booth; "if I can give you any satisfaction — "

"No, no," said she, "I must hear all; I would not for the world break the thread of your story. Besides, I am afraid to ask — Pray, pray, sir, go on."

"Well, madam," cries Booth, "I think I was mentioning the extraordinary acts of friendship done me by Captain James; nor can I help taking notice of the almost unparalleled fidelity of poor Atkinson (for that was my man's name), who was not only constant in the assiduity of his attendance, but during the time of my danger demonstrated a concern



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for me which I can hardly account for, as my prevailing on his captain to make him a sergeant was the first favour he ever received at my hands, and this did not happen till I was almost perfectly recovered of my broken leg. Poor fellow! I shall never forget the extravagant joy his halbert gave him; I remember it the more because it was one of the happiest days of my own life; for it was upon this day that I received a letter from my dear Amelia, after a long silence, acquainting me that she was out of all danger from her lying-in.

"I was now once more able to perform my duty; when (so unkind was the fortune of war), the second time I mounted the guard, I received a violent contusion from the bursting of a bomb. I was felled to the ground, where I lay breathless by the blow, till honest Atkinson came to my assistance, and conveyed me to my room, where a surgeon immediately attended me.

"The injury I had now received was much more dangerous in my surgeon's opinion than the former; it caused me to spit blood, and was attended with a fever, and other bad symptoms; so that very fatal consequences were apprehended.

"In this situation, the image of my Amelia haunted me day and night; and the apprehensions of never seeing her more were so intolerable, that I had thoughts of resigning my commission, and returning home, weak as I was, that I might have, at least, the satisfaction of dying in the arms of my love. Captain James, however, persisted in dissuading me from any such resolution. He told me my



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honour was too much concerned, attempted to raise my hopes of recovery to the utmost of his power; but chiefly he prevailed on me by suggesting that, if the worst which I apprehended should happen, it was much better for Amelia that she should be absent than present in so melancholy an hour. 'I know,' cried he, 'the extreme joy which must arise in you from meeting again with Amelia, and the comfort of expiring in her arms; but consider what she herself must endure upon the dreadful occasion, and you would not wish to purchase any happiness at the price of so much pain to her.' This argument at length prevailed on me; and it was after many long debates resolved, that she should not even know my present condition, till my doom either for life or death was absolutely fixed."

"Oh! Heavens! how great! how generous!" cried Miss Matthews. "Booth, thou art a noble fellow; and I scarce think there is a woman upon earth worthy so exalted a passion."

Booth made a modest answer to the compliment which Miss Matthews had paid him. This drew more civilities from the lady, and these again more acknowledgments; all which we shall pass by, and proceed with our history.



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## CHAPTER SIX

### CONTAINING MATTERS WHICH WILL PLEASE SOME READERS.

TWO months and more had I continued in a state of incertainty, sometimes with more flattering, and sometimes with more alarming symptoms; when one afternoon poor Atkinson came running into my room, all pale and out of breath, and begged me not to be surprised at his news. I asked him eagerly what was the matter, and if it was anything concerning Amelia? I had scarce uttered the dear name when she herself rushed into the room, and ran hastily to me, crying, 'Yes, it is, it is your Amelia herself.'

"There is nothing so difficult to describe, and generally so dull when described, as scenes of excessive tenderness."

"Can you think so?" says Miss Matthews; "surely there is nothing so charming! — Oh! Mr. Booth, our sex is d—ned by the want of tenderness in yours. O, were they all like you — certainly no man was ever your equal."

"Indeed, madam," cries Booth, "you honour me too much. But — well — when the first transports of our meeting were over, Amelia began gently to chide me for having concealed my illness from her;



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for, in three letters which I had writ her since the accident had happened, there was not the least mention of it, or any hint given by which she could possibly conclude I was otherwise than in perfect health. And when I had excused myself, by assigning the true reason, she cried — 'O Mr. Booth! and do you know so little of your Amelia as to think I could or would survive you? Would it not be better for one dreadful sight to break my heart all at once than to break it by degrees? — O Billy! can anything pay me for the loss of this embrace?' —— But I ask your pardon — how ridiculous doth my fondness appear in your eyes!"

"How often," answered she, "shall I assert the contrary? What would you have me say, Mr. Booth? Shall I tell you I envy Mrs. Booth of all the women in the world? would you believe me if I did? I hope you — what am I saying? Pray make no farther apology, but go on."

"After a scene," continued he, "too tender to be conceived by many, Amelia informed me that she had received a letter from an unknown hand, acquainting her with my misfortune, and advising her, if she ever desired to see me more, to come directly to Gibraltar. She said she should not have delayed a moment after receiving this letter, had not the same ship brought her one from me written with rather more than usual gaiety, and in which there was not the least mention of my indisposition. This, she said, greatly puzzled her and her mother, and the worthy divine endeavoured to persuade her to give credit to my letter, and to impute the other



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to a species of wit with which the world greatly abounds. This consists entirely in doing various kinds of mischief to our fellow-creatures, by belying one, deceiving another, exposing a third, and drawing in a fourth, to expose himself; in short, by making some the objects of laughter, others of contempt; and indeed not seldom by subjecting them to very great inconveniences, perhaps to ruin, for the sake of a jest.

"Mrs. Harris and the doctor derived the letter from this species of wit. Miss Betty, however, was of a different opinion, and advised poor Amelia to apply to an officer whom the governor had sent over in the same ship, by whom the report of my illness was so strongly confirmed, that Amelia immediately resolved on her voyage.

"I had a great curiosity to know the author of this letter, but not the least trace of it could be discovered. The only person with whom I lived in any great intimacy was Captain James, and he, madam, from what I have already told you, you will think to be the last person I could suspect; besides, he declared upon his honour that he knew nothing of the matter, and no man's honour is, I believe, more sacred. There was indeed an ensign of another regiment who knew my wife, and who had sometimes visited me in my illness; but he was a very unlikely man to interest himself much in any affairs which did not concern him; and he too declared he knew nothing of it."

"And did you never discover this secret?" cried Miss Matthews.



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"Never to this day," answered Booth.

"I fancy," said she, "I could give a shrewd guess. What so likely as that Mrs. Booth, when you left her, should have given her foster-brother orders to send her word of whatever befel you? Yet stay — that could not be neither; for then she would not have doubted whether she should leave dear England on the receipt of the letter. No, it must have been by some other means; — yet that I own appeared extremely natural to me; for if I had been left by such a husband I think I should have pursued the same method."

"No, madam," cried Booth, "it must have been conveyed by some other channel; for my Amelia, I am certain, was entirely ignorant of the manner; and as for poor Atkinson, I am convinced he would not have ventured to take such a step without acquainting me. Besides, the poor fellow had, I believe, such a regard for my wife, out of gratitude for the favours she hath done his mother, that I make no doubt he was highly rejoiced at her absence from my melancholy scene. Well, whoever writ it is a matter very immaterial; yet, as it seemed so odd and unaccountable an incident, I could not help mentioning it.

"From the time of Amelia's arrival nothing remarkable happened till my perfect recovery, unless I should observe her remarkable behaviour, so full of care and tenderness, that it was perhaps without a parallel."

"O no, Mr. Booth," cries the lady; "it is fully equalled, I am sure, by your gratitude. There is



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nothing, I believe, so rare as gratitude in your sex, especially in husbands. So kind a remembrance is, indeed, more than a return to such an obligation; for where is the mighty obligation which a woman confers, who being possessed of an inestimable jewel, is so kind to herself as to be careful and tender of it? I do not say this to lessen your opinion of Mrs. Booth. I have no doubt but that she loves you as well as she is capable. But I would not have you think so meanly of our sex as to imagine there are not a thousand women susceptible of true tenderness towards a meritorious man. Believe me, Mr. Booth, if I had received such an account of an accident having happened to such a husband, a mother and a parson would not have held me a moment. I should have leapt into the first fishing-boat I could have found, and bid defiance to the winds and waves. — Oh! there is no true tenderness but in a woman of spirit. I would not be understood all this while to reflect on Mrs. Booth. I am only defending the cause of my sex; for, upon my soul, such compliments to a wife are a satire on all the rest of womankind."

"Sure you jest, Miss Matthews," answered Booth with a smile; "however, if you please, I will proceed in my story."



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## CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CAPTAIN, CONTINUING HIS STORY, RECOUNTS SOME PARTICULARS WHICH, WE DOUBT NOT, TO MANY GOOD PEOPLE, WILL APPEAR UNNATURAL.

I WAS scarce sooner recovered from my indisposition than Amelia herself fell ill. This, I am afraid, was occasioned by the fatigues which I could not prevent her from undergoing on my account; for, as my disease went off with violent sweats, during which the surgeon strictly ordered that I should lie by myself, my Amelia could not be prevailed upon to spend many hours in her own bed. During my restless fits she would sometimes read to me several hours together; indeed it was not without difficulty that she ever quitted my bedside. These fatigues, added to the uneasiness of her mind, overpowered her weak spirits, and threw her into one of the worst disorders that can possibly attend a woman; a disorder very common among the ladies, and our physicians have not agreed upon its name. Some call it fever on the spirits, some a nervous fever, some the vapours, and some the hysterics."

"O say no more," cries Miss Matthews; "I pity you, I pity you from my soul. A man had better



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be plagued with all the curses of Egypt than with a vapourish wife."

"Pity me! madam," answered Booth; "pity rather that dear creature who, from her love and care of my unworthy self, contracted a distemper, the horrors of which are scarce to be imagined. It is, indeed, a sort of complication of all diseases together, with almost madness added to them. In this situation, the siege being at an end, the governor gave me leave to attend my wife to Montpelier, the air of which was judged to be most likely to restore her to health. Upon this occasion she wrote to her mother to desire a remittance, and set forth the melancholy condition of her health, and her necessity for money, in such terms as would have touched any bosom not void of humanity, though a stranger to the unhappy sufferer. Her sister answered it, and I believe I have a copy of the answer in my pocket. I keep it by me as a curiosity, and you would think it more so could I shew you my Amelia's letter." He then searched his pocket-book, and finding the letter among many others, he read it in the following words:

"'DEAR SISTER, — My mamma being much disordered, hath commanded me to tell you she is both shocked and surprized at your extraordinary request, or, as she chuses to call it, order for money. You know, my dear, she says that your marriage with this red-coat man was entirely against her consent and the opinion of all your family (I am sure I may here include myself in that number); and yet, after this fatal act of disobedience, she was prevailed on to receive you as her child; not, however, nor are you so to



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understand it, as the favourite which you was before. She forgave you; but this was as a Christian and a parent; still preserving in her own mind a just sense of your disobedience, and a just resentment on that account. And yet, notwithstanding this resentment, she desires you to remember that, when you a second time ventured to oppose her authority, and nothing would serve you but taking a ramble (an indecent one, I can't help saying) after your fellow, she thought fit to shew the excess of a mother's tenderness, and furnished you with no less than fifty pounds for your foolish voyage. How can she, then, be otherwise than surprized at your present demand? which, should she be so weak to comply with, she must expect to be every month repeated, in order to supply the extravagance of a young rakish officer. You say she will compassionate your sufferings; yes, surely she doth greatly compassionate them, and so do I too, though you was neither so kind nor so civil as to suppose I should. But I forgive all your slights to me, as well now as formerly. Nay, I not only forgive, but I pray daily for you. But, dear sister, what could you expect less than what hath happened? you should have believed your friends, who were wiser and older than you. I do not here mean myself, though I own I am eleven months and some odd weeks your superior; though, had I been younger, I might, perhaps, have been able to advise you; for wisdom and what some may call beauty do not always go together. You will not be offended at this; for I know in your heart, you have always held your head above some people, whom, perhaps, other people have thought better of; but why do I mention what I scorn so much? No, my dear sister, Heaven forbid it should ever be said of me that I value myself upon my face —



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not but if I could believe men perhaps — but I hate and despise men — you know I do, my dear, and I wish you had despised them as much; but *jacta est jalea*, as the doctor says. You are to make the best of your fortune — what fortune, I mean, my mamma may please to give you, for you know all is in her power. Let me advise you, then, to bring your mind to your circumstances, and remember (for I can't help writing it, as it is for your own good) the vapours are a distemper which very ill become a knapsack. Remember, my dear, what you have done; remember what my mamma hath done; remember we have something of yours to keep, and do not consider yourself as an only child; no, nor as a favourite child; but be pleased to remember,

Dear sister,

Your most affectionate sister,

and most obedient humble servant,

E. HARRIS.'"

"O brave Miss Betty!" cried Miss Matthews; "I always held her in high esteem; but I protest she exceeds even what I could have expected from her."

"This letter, madam," cries Booth, "you will believe, was an excellent cordial for my poor wife's spirits. So dreadful indeed was the effect it had upon her, that, as she had read it in my absence, I found her, at my return home, in the most violent fits; and so long was it before she recovered her senses, that I despaired of that blest event ever happening; and my own senses very narrowly escaped from being sacrificed to my despair. However, she came at last to herself, and I began to consider of every means of carrying her immediately to Mont-



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pelier, which was now become much more necessary than before.

"Though I was greatly shocked at the barbarity of the letter, yet I apprehended no very ill consequence from it; for, as it was believed all over the army that I had married a great fortune, I had received offers of money, if I wanted it, from more than one. Indeed, I might have easily carried my wife to Montpelier at any time; but she was extremely averse to the voyage, being desirous of our returning to England, as I had leave to do; and she grew daily so much better, that, had it not been for the receipt of that cursed — which I have just read to you, I am persuaded she might have been able to return to England in the next ship.

"Among others there was a colonel in the garrison who had not only offered but importuned me to receive money of him; I now, therefore, repaired to him; and, as a reason for altering my resolution, I produced the letter, and, at the same time, acquainted him with the true state of my affairs. The colonel read the letter, shook his head, and, after some silence, said he was sorry I had refused to accept his offer before; but that he had now so ordered matters, and disposed of his money, that he had not a shilling left to spare from his own occasions.

"Answers of the same kind I had from several others, but not one penny could I borrow of any; for I have been since firmly persuaded that the honest colonel was not content with denying me himself, but took effectual means, by spreading the secret I had so foolishly trusted him with, to prevent me



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from succeeding elsewhere; for such is the nature of men, that whoever denies himself to do you a favour is unwilling that it should be done to you by any other.

"This was the first time I had ever felt that distress which arises from the want of money; a distress very dreadful indeed in a married state; for what can be more miserable than to see anything necessary to the preservation of a beloved creature, and not be able to supply it?

"Perhaps you may wonder, madam, that I have not mentioned Captain James on this occasion; but he was at that time laid up at Algiers (whither he had been sent by the governor) in a fever. However, he returned time enough to supply me, which he did with the utmost readiness on the very first mention of my distress; and the good colonel, notwithstanding his having disposed of his money, discounted the captain's draft. You see, madam, an instance in the generous behaviour of my friend James, how false are all universal satires against humankind. He is indeed one of the worthiest men the world ever produced.

"But, perhaps, you will be more pleased still with the extravagant generosity of my sergeant. The day before the return of Mr. James, the poor fellow came to me with tears in his eyes, and begged I would not be offended at what he was going to mention. He then pulled a purse from his pocket, which contained, he said, the sum of twelve pounds, and which he begged me to accept, crying, he was sorry it was not in his power to lend me whatever I wanted. I was



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so struck with this instance of generosity and friendship in such a person, that I gave him an opportunity of pressing me a second time before I made him an answer. Indeed, I was greatly surprised how he came to be worth that little sum, and no less at his being acquainted with my own wants. In both which points he presently satisfied me. As to the first, it seems he had plundered a Spanish officer of fifteen pistoles; and as to the second, he confessed he had it from my wife's maid, who had overheard some discourse between her mistress and me. Indeed people, I believe, always deceive themselves, who imagine they can conceal distrest circumstances from their servants; for these are always extremely quick-sighted on such occasions."

"Good heavens!" cries Miss Matthews, "how astonishing is such behaviour in so low a fellow!"

"I thought so myself," answered Booth; "and yet I know not, on a more strict examination into the matter, why we should be more surprised to see greatness of mind discover itself in one degree or rank of life than in another. Love, benevolence, or what you will please to call it, may be the reigning passion in a beggar as well as in a prince; and wherever it is, its energies will be the same.

"To confess the truth, I am afraid we often compliment what we call upper life, with too much injustice, at the expense of the lower. As it is no rare thing to see instances which degrade human nature in persons of the highest birth and education, so I apprehend that examples of whatever is really great and good have been sometimes found amongst those



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who have wanted all such advantages. In reality, palaces, I make no doubt, do sometimes contain nothing but dreariness and darkness, and the sun of righteousness hath shone forth with all its glory in a cottage."



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## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE STORY OF BOOTH CONTINUED.

MR. BOOTH thus went on:

"We now took leave of the garrison, and, having landed at Marseilles, arrived at Montpelier, without anything happening to us worth remembrance, except the extreme sea-sickness of poor Amelia; but I was afterwards well repaid for the terrors which it occasioned me by the good consequences which attended it; for I believe it contributed, even more than the air of Montpelier, to the perfect re-establishment of her health."

"I ask your pardon for interrupting you," cries Miss Matthews, "but you never satisfied me whether you took the sergeant's money. You have made me half in love with that charming fellow."

"How can you imagine, madam," answered Booth, "I should have taken from a poor fellow what was of so little consequence to me, and at the same time of so much to him? Perhaps, now, you will derive this from the passion of pride."

"Indeed," says she, "I neither derive it from the passion of pride nor from the passion of folly: but methinks you should have accepted the offer, and I am convinced you hurt him very much when you re-



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fused it. But pray proceed in your story." Then Booth went on as follows:

"As Amelia recovered her health and spirits daily, we began to pass our time very pleasantly at Montpelier; for the greatest enemy to the French will acknowledge that they are the best people in the world to live amongst for a little while. In some countries it is almost as easy to get a good estate as a good acquaintance. In England, particularly, acquaintance is of almost as slow growth as an oak; so that the age of man scarce suffices to bring it to any perfection, and families seldom contract any great intimacy till the third, or at least the second generation. So shy indeed are we English of letting a stranger into our houses, that one would imagine we regarded all such as thieves. Now the French are the very reverse. Being a stranger among them entitles you to the better place, and to the greater degree of civility; and if you wear but the appearance of a gentleman, they never suspect you are not one. Their friendship indeed seldom extends as far as their purse; nor is such friendship usual in other countries. To say the truth, politeness carries friendship far enough in the ordinary occasions of life, and those who want this accomplishment rarely make amends for it by their sincerity; for bluntness, or rather rudeness, as it commonly deserves to be called, is not always so much a mark of honesty as it is taken to be.

"The day after our arrival we became acquainted with Mons. Bagillard. He was a Frenchman of great wit and vivacity, with a greater share of learning than



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gentlemen are usually possessed of. As he lodged in the same house with us, we were immediately acquainted, and I liked his conversation so well that I never thought I had too much of his company. Indeed, I spent so much of my time with him, that Amelia (I know not whether I ought to mention it) grew uneasy at our familiarity, and complained of my being too little with her, from my violent fondness for my new acquaintance; for, our conversation turning chiefly upon books, and principally Latin ones (for we read several of the classics together), she could have but little entertainment by being with us. When my wife had once taken it into her head that she was deprived of my company by M. Bagillard, it was impossible to change her opinion; and, though I now spent more of my time with her than I had ever done before, she still grew more and more dissatisfied, till at last she very earnestly desired me to quit my lodgings, and insisted upon it with more vehemence than I had ever known her express before. To say the truth, if that excellent woman could ever be thought unreasonable, I thought she was so on this occasion.

"But in what light soever her desires appeared to me, as they manifestly arose from an affection of which I had daily the most endearing proofs, I resolved to comply with her, and accordingly removed to a distant part of the town; for it is my opinion that we can have but little love for the person whom we will never indulge in an unreasonable demand. Indeed, I was under a difficulty with regard to Mons. Bagillard; for, as I could not possibly com-



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municate to him the true reason for quitting my lodgings, so I found it as difficult to deceive him by a counterfeit one; besides, I was apprehensive I should have little less of his company than before. I could, indeed, have avoided this dilemma by leaving Montpelier, for Amelia had perfectly recovered her health; but I had faithfully promised Captain James to wait his return from Italy, whither he was gone some time before from Gibraltar; nor was it proper for Amelia to take any long journey, she being now near six months gone with child.

"This difficulty, however, proved to be less than I had imagined it; for my French friend, whether he suspected anything from my wife's behaviour, though she never, as I observed, shewed him the least incivility, became suddenly as cold on his side. After our leaving the lodgings he never made above two or three formal visits; indeed his time was soon after entirely taken up by an intrigue with a certain countess, which blazed all over Montpelier.

"We had not been long in our new apartments before an English officer arrived at Montpelier, and came to lodge in the same house with us. This gentleman, whose name was Bath, was of the rank of a major, and had so much singularity in his character, that, perhaps, you never heard of any like him. He was far from having any of those bookish qualifications which had before caused my Amelia's disquiet. It is true, his discourse generally turned on matters of no feminine kind; war and martial exploits being the ordinary topics of his conversation: however, as he had a sister with whom Amelia



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was greatly pleased, an intimacy presently grew between us, and we four lived in one family.

"The major was a great dealer in the marvellous, and was constantly the little hero of his own tale. This made him very entertaining to Amelia, who, of all the persons in the world, hath the truest taste and enjoyment of the ridiculous; for, whilst no one sooner discovers it in the character of another, no one so well conceals her knowledge of it from the ridiculous person. I cannot help mentioning a sentiment of hers on this head, as I think it doth her great honour. 'If I had the same neglect,' said she, 'for ridiculous people with the generality of the world, I should rather think them the objects of tears than laughter; but, in reality, I have known several who, in some parts of their characters, have been extremely ridiculous, in others have been altogether as amiable. For instance,' said she, 'here is the major, who tells us of many things which he has never seen, and of others which he hath never done, and both in the most extravagant excess; and yet how amiable is his behaviour to his poor sister, whom he hath not only brought over hither for her health, at his own expence, but is come to bear her company.' I believe, madam, I repeat her very words; for I am very apt to remember what she says.

"You will easily believe, from a circumstance I have just mentioned in the major's favour, especially when I have told you that his sister was one of the best of girls, that it was entirely necessary to hide from her all kind of laughter at any part of her brother's behaviour. To say the truth, this was



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easy enough to do; for the poor girl was so blinded with love and gratitude, and so highly honoured and reverenced her brother, that she had not the least suspicion that there was a person in the world capable of laughing at him.

"Indeed, I am certain she never made the least discovery of our ridicule; for I am well convinced she would have resented it: for, besides the love she bore her brother, she had a little family pride, which would sometimes appear. To say the truth, if she had any fault, it was that of vanity, but she was a very good girl upon the whole; and none of us are entirely free from faults."

"You are a good-natured fellow, Will," answered Miss Matthews; "but vanity is a fault of the first magnitude in a woman, and often the occasion of many others."

To this Booth made no answer, but continued his story.

"In this company we passed two or three months very agreeably, till the major and I both betook ourselves to our several nurseries; my wife being brought to bed of a girl, and Miss Bath confined to her chamber by a surfeit, which had like to have occasioned her death."

Here Miss Matthews burst into a loud laugh, of which when Booth asked the reason, she said she could not forbear at the thoughts of two such nurses. "And did you really," says she, "make your wife's caudle yourself?"

"Indeed, madam," said he, "I did; and do you think that so extraordinary?"



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"Indeed I do," answered she; "I thought the best husbands had looked on their wives' lying-in as a time of festival and jollity. What! did you not even get drunk in the time of your wife's delivery? tell me honestly how you employed yourself at this time."

"Why, then, honestly," replied he, "and in defiance of your laughter, I lay behind her bolster, and supported her in my arms; and, upon my soul, I believe I felt more pain in my mind than she underwent in her body. And now answer me as honestly: Do you really think it a proper time of mirth, when the creature one loves to distraction is undergoing the most racking torments, as well as in the most imminent danger? and —— but I need not express any more tender circumstances."

"I am to answer honestly," cried she. "Yes, and sincerely," cries Booth. "Why, then, honestly and sincerely," says she, "may I never see heaven if I don't think you an angel of a man!"

"Nay, madam," answered Booth — "but, indeed, you do me too much honour; there are many such husbands. Nay, have we not an example of the like tenderness in the major? though as to him, I believe, I shall make you laugh. While my wife lay-in, Miss Bath being extremely ill, I went one day to the door of her apartment, to enquire after her health, as well as for the major, whom I had not seen during a whole week. I knocked softly at the door, and being bid to open it, I found the major in his sister's ante-chamber warming her posset. His dress was certainly whimsical enough, having on a



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woman's bedgown and a very dirty flannel nightcap, which, being added to a very odd person (for he is a very aukward thin man, near seven feet high), might have formed, in the opinion of most men, a very proper object of laughter. The major started from his seat at my entering into the room, and, with much emotion, and a great oath, cried out, 'Is it you, sir?' I then enquired after his and his sister's health. He answered, that his sister was better, and he was very well, 'though I did not expect, sir,' cried he, with not a little confusion, 'to be seen by you in this situation.' I told him I thought it impossible he could appear in a situation more becoming his character. 'You do not?' answered he. 'By G— I am very much obliged to you for that opinion; but, I believe, sir, however my weakness may prevail on me to descend from it, no man can be more conscious of his own dignity than myself.' His sister then called to him from the inner room; upon which he rang the bell for her servant, and then, after a stride or two across the room, he said, with an elated aspect, 'I would not have you think, Mr. Booth, because you have caught me in this deshabille, by coming upon me a little too abruptly — I cannot help saying a little too abruptly — that I am my sister's nurse. I know better what is due to the dignity of a man, and I have shewn it in a line of battle. I think I have made a figure there, Mr. Booth, and becoming my character; by G— I ought not to be despised too much if my nature is not totally without its weaknesses.' He uttered this, and some more of the same kind, with great



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majesty, or, as he called it, dignity. Indeed, he used some hard words that I did not understand; for all his words are not to be found in a dictionary. Upon the whole, I could not easily refrain from laughter; however, I conquered myself, and soon after retired from him, astonished that it was possible for a man to possess true goodness, and be at the same time ashamed of it.

"But, if I was surprized at what had past at this visit, how much more was I surprized the next morning, when he came very early to my chamber, and told me he had not been able to sleep one wink at what had past between us! 'There were some words of yours,' says he, 'which must be further explained before we part. You told me, sir, when you found me in that situation, which I cannot bear to recollect, that you thought I could not appear in one more becoming my character; these were the words — I shall never forget them. Do you imagine that there is any of the dignity of a man wanting in my character? do you think that I have, during my sister's illness, behaved with a weakness that savours too much of effeminacy? I know how much it is beneath a man to whine and whimper about a trifling girl as well as you or any man; and, if my sister had died, I should have behaved like a man on the occasion. I would not have you think I confined myself from company merely upon her account. I was very much disordered myself. And when you surprized me in that situation — I repeat again, in that situation — her nurse had not left the room three minutes, and I was blowing the fire for fear it should



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have gone out.' — In this manner he ran on almost a quarter of an hour before he would suffer me to speak. At last, looking steadfastly in his face, I asked him if I must conclude that he was in earnest? 'In earnest!' says he, repeating my words, 'do you then take my character for a jest?' — Lookee, sir, said I, very gravely, I think we know one another very well; and I have no reason to suspect you should impute it to fear when I tell you I was so far from intending to affront you, that I meant you one of the highest compliments. Tenderness for women is so far from lessening, that it proves a true manly character. The manly Brutus shewed the utmost tenderness to his Portia; and the great king of Sweden, the bravest, and even fiercest of men, shut himself up three whole days in the midst of a campaign, and would see no company, on the death of a favourite sister. At these words I saw his features soften; and he cried out, 'D—n me, I admire the king of Sweden of all the men in the world; and he is a rascal that is ashamed of doing anything which the king of Sweden did. — And yet, if any king of Sweden in France was to tell me that his sister had more merit than mine, by G— I'd knock his brains about his ears. Poor little Betsy! she is the honestest, worthiest girl that ever was born. Heaven be praised, she is recovered; for, if I had lost her, I never should have enjoyed another happy moment.' In this manner he ran on some time, till the tears began to overflow; which when he perceived, he stopt; perhaps he was unable to go on; for he seemed almost choaked: after a short silence, how-



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ever, having wiped his eyes with his handkerchief, he fetched a deep sigh, and cried, 'I am ashamed you should see this, Mr. Booth; but d—n me, nature will get the better of dignity.' I now comforted him with the example of Xerxes, as I had before done with that of the king of Sweden; and soon after we sat down to breakfast together with much cordial friendship; for I assure you, with all his oddity, there is not a better-natured man in the world than the major."

"Good-natured, indeed!" cries Miss Matthews, with great scorn. "A fool! how can you mention such a fellow with commendation?"

Booth spoke as much as he could in defence of his friend; indeed, he had represented him in as favourable a light as possible, and had particularly left out those hard words with which, as he hath observed a little before, the major interlarded his discourse. Booth then proceeded as in the next chapter.



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## CHAPTER NINE

### CONTAINING VERY EXTRAORDINARY MATTERS.

"MISS BATH," continued Booth, "now recovered so fast, that she was abroad as soon as my wife. Our little partie quarrée began to grow agreeable again; and we mixed with the company of the place more than we had done before. Mons. Bagillard now again renewed his intimacy, for the countess, his mistress, was gone to Paris; at which my wife, at first, shewed no dissatisfaction; and I imagined that, as she had a friend and companion of her own sex (for Miss Bath and she had contracted the highest fondness for each other), that she would the less miss my company. However, I was disappointed in this expectation; for she soon began to express her former uneasiness, and her impatience for the arrival of Captain James, that we might entirely quit Montpelier.

"I could not avoid conceiving some little displeasure at this humour of my wife, which I was forced to think a little unreasonable."—"A little, do you call it?" says Miss Matthews: "Good Heavens! what a husband are you!"—"How little worthy," answered he, "as you will say hereafter, of such a wife as my Amelia. One day, as we were sitting to-



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gether, I heard a violent scream; upon which my wife, starting up, cried out, 'Sure that 's Miss Bath's voice;' and immediately ran towards the chamber whence it proceeded. I followed her; and when we arrived, we there beheld the most shocking sight imaginable; Miss Bath lying dead on the floor, and the major all bloody kneeling by her, and roaring out for assistance. Amelia, though she was herself in little better condition than her friend, ran hastily to her, bared her neck, and attempted to loosen her stays, while I ran up and down, scarce knowing what I did, calling for water and cordials, and despatching several servants one after another for doctors and surgeons.

"Water, cordials, and all necessary implements being brought, Miss Bath was at length recovered, and placed in her chair, when the major seated himself by her. And now, the young lady being restored to life, the major, who, till then, had engaged as little of his own as of any other person's attention, became the object of all our considerations, especially his poor sister's, who had no sooner recovered sufficient strength than she began to lament her brother, crying out that he was killed; and bitterly bewailing her fate, in having revived from her swoon to behold so dreadful a spectacle. While Amelia applied herself to soothe the agonies of her friend, I began to enquire into the condition of the major, in which I was assisted by a surgeon, who now arrived. The major declared, with great chearfulness, that he did not apprehend his wound to be in the least dangerous, and therefore begged his sister to be comforted,



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saying he was convinced the surgeon would soon give her the same assurance; but that good man was not so liberal of assurances as the major had expected; for as soon as he had probed the wound he afforded no more than hopes, declaring that it was a very ugly wound; but added, by way of consolation, that he had cured many much worse.

"When the major was drest his sister seemed to possess his whole thoughts, and all his care was to relieve her grief. He solemnly protested that it was no more than a flesh wound, and not very deep, nor could, as he apprehended, be in the least dangerous; and as for the cold expressions of the surgeon, he very well accounted for them from a motive too obvious to be mentioned. From these declarations of her brother, and the interposition of her friends, and, above all, I believe, from that vast vent which she had given to her fright, Miss Bath seemed a little pacified: Amelia, therefore, at last prevailed; and, as terror abated, curiosity became the superior passion. I therefore now began to enquire what had occasioned that accident whence all the uproar arose.

"The major took me by the hand, and, looking very kindly at me, said, 'My dear Mr. Booth, I must begin by asking your pardon; for I have done you an injury for which nothing but the height of friendship in me can be an excuse; and therefore nothing but the height of friendship in you can forgive.' This preamble, madam, you will easily believe, greatly alarmed all the company, but especially me. I answered, Dear major, I forgive you, let it be what it will; but what is it possible you can have



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done to injure me? 'That,' replied he, 'which I am convinced a man of your honour and dignity of nature, by G—, must conclude to be one of the highest injuries. I have taken out of your own hands the doing yourself justice. I am afraid I have killed the man who hath injured your honour. I mean that villain Bagillard — but I cannot proceed; for you, madam,' said he to my wife, 'are concerned, and I know what is due to the dignity of your sex.' Amelia, I observed, turned pale at these words, but eagerly begged him to proceed. 'Nay, madam,' answered he, 'if I am commanded by a lady, it is a part of my dignity to obey.' He then proceeded to tell us that Bagillard had rallied him upon a supposition that he was pursuing my wife with a view of gallantry; telling him that he could never succeed; giving hints that, if it had been possible, he should have succeeded himself; and ending with calling my poor Amelia an accomplished prude; upon which the major gave Bagillard a box in the ear, and both immediately drew their swords.

"The major had scarce ended his speech when a servant came into the room, and told me there was a fryar below who desired to speak with me in great haste. I shook the major by the hand, and told him I not only forgave him, but was extremely obliged to his friendship; and then, going to the fryar, I found that he was Bagillard's confessor, from whom he came to me, with an earnest desire of seeing me, that he might ask my pardon and receive my forgiveness before he died for the injury he had intended me. My wife at first opposed my going, from some



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sudden fears on my account; but when she was convinced they were groundless she consented.

"I found Bagillard in his bed; for the major's sword had passed up to the very hilt through his body. After having very earnestly asked my pardon, he made me many compliments on the possession of a woman who, joined to the most exquisite beauty, was mistress of the most impregnable virtue; as a proof of which he acknowledged the vehemence as well as ill success of his attempts: and, to make Amelia's virtue appear the brighter, his vanity was so predominant he could not forbear running over the names of several women of fashion who had yielded to his passion, which, he said, had never raged so violently for any other as for my poor Amelia; and that this violence, which he had found wholly unconquerable, he hoped would procure his pardon at my hands. It is unnecessary to mention what I said on the occasion. I assured him of my entire forgiveness; and so we parted. To say the truth, I afterwards thought myself almost obliged to him for a meeting with Amelia the most luxuriously delicate that can be imagined.

"I now ran to my wife, whom I embraced with raptures of love and tenderness. When the first torrent of these was a little abated, 'Confess to me, my dear,' said she, 'could your goodness prevent you from thinking me a little unreasonable in expressing so much uneasiness at the loss of your company, while I ought to have rejoiced in the thoughts of your being so well entertained; I know you must; and then consider what I must have felt, while I



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knew I was daily lessening myself in your esteem, and forced into a conduct which I was sensible must appear to you, who was ignorant of my motive, to be mean, vulgar, and selfish. And yet, what other course had I to take with a man whom no denial, no scorn could abash? But, if this was a cruel task, how much more wretched still was the constraint I was obliged to wear in his presence before you, to shew outward civility to the man whom my soul detested, for fear of any fatal consequence from your suspicion; and this too while I was afraid he would construe it to be an encouragement? Do you not pity your poor Amelia when you reflect on her situation?' Pity! cried I; my love! is pity an adequate expression for esteem, for adoration? But how, my love, could he carry this on so secretly?—by letters? 'O no, he offered me many; but I never would receive but one, and that I returned him. Good G—! I would not have such a letter in my possession for the universe; I thought my eyes contaminated with reading it.'" "O brave!" cried Miss Matthews; "heroic, I protest.

"'Had I a wish that did not bear
The stamp and image of my dear,
I 'd pierce my heart through ev'ry vein,
And die to let it out again.'"

"And you can really," cried he, "laugh at so much tenderness?" "I laugh at tenderness! O, Mr. Booth!" answered she, "thou knowest but little of Calista." "I thought formerly," cried he, "I knew a great deal, and thought you, of all women



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in the world, to have the greatest —— of all women!" "Take care, Mr. Booth," said she. "By heaven! if you thought so, you thought truly. But what is the object of my tenderness — such an object as ——" "Well, madam," says he, "I hope you will find one." "I thank you for that hope, however," says she, "cold as it is. But pray go on with your story;" which command he immediately obeyed.



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## CHAPTER TEN

CONTAINING A LETTER OF A VERY CURIOUS KIND.

THE major's wound," continued Booth, "was really as slight as he believed it; so that in a very few days he was perfectly well; nor was Bagillard, though run through the body, long apprehending to be in any danger of his life. The major then took me aside, and, wishing me heartily joy of Bagillard's recovery, told me I should now, by the gift (as it were) of Heaven, have an opportunity of doing myself justice. I answered I could not think of any such thing; for that when I imagined he was on his death-bed I had heartily and sincerely forgiven him. 'Very right,' replied the major, 'and consistent with your honour, when he was on his death-bed; but that forgiveness was only conditional, and is revoked by his recovery.' I told him I could not possibly revoke it; for that my anger was really gone. — 'What hath anger,' cried he, 'to do with the matter? the dignity of my nature hath been always my reason for drawing my sword; and when that is concerned I can as readily fight with the man I love as with the man I hate.' — I will not tire you with the repetition of the whole argument, in which the major did not prevail; and I really believe I sunk a little in his esteem upon that account, till



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Captain James, who arrived soon after, again perfectly reinstated me in his favour.

"When the captain was come there remained no cause of our longer stay at Montpelier; for, as to my wife, she was in a better state of health than I had ever known her; and Miss Bath had not only recovered her health but her bloom, and from a pale skeleton was become a plump, handsome young woman. James was again my cashier; for, far from receiving any remittance, it was now a long time since I had received any letter from England, though both myself and my dear Amelia had written several, both to my mother and sister; and now, at our departure from Montpelier, I bethought myself of writing to my good friend the doctor, acquainting him with our journey to Paris, whither I desired he would direct his answer.

"At Paris we all arrived without encountering any adventure on the road worth relating; nor did anything of consequence happen here during the first fortnight; for, as you know neither Captain James nor Miss Bath, it is scarce worth telling you that an affection, which afterwards ended in a marriage, began now to appear between them, in which it may appear odd to you that I made the first discovery of the lady's flame, and my wife of the captain's.

"The seventeenth day after our arrival at Paris I received a letter from the doctor, which I have in my pocket-book; and, if you please, I will read it you; for I would not willingly do any injury to his words."



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The lady, you may easily believe, desired to hear the letter, and Booth read it as follows:

"'My dear Children — For I will now call you so, as you have neither of you now any other parent in this world. Of this melancholy news I should have sent you earlier notice if I had thought you ignorant of it, or indeed if I had known whither to have written. If your sister hath received any letters from you she hath kept them a secret, and perhaps out of affection to you hath reposited them in the same place where she keeps her goodness, and, what I am afraid is much dearer to her, her money. The reports concerning you have been various; so is always the case in matters where men are ignorant; for, when no man knows what the truth is, every man thinks himself at liberty to report what he pleases. Those who wish you well, son Booth, say simply that you are dead: others, that you ran away from the siege, and was cashiered. As for my daughter, all agree that she is a saint above; and there are not wanting those who hint that her husband sent her thither. From this beginning you will expect, I suppose, better news than I am going to tell you; but pray, my dear children, why may not I, who have always laughed at my own afflictions, laugh at yours, without the censure of much malevolence? I wish you could learn this temper from me; for, take my word for it, nothing truer ever came from the mouth of a heathen than that sentence:

'—— *Leve fit quod bene fertur onus.*'[1]

And though I must confess I never thought Aristotle (whom I do not take for so great a blockhead as some who have never read him) doth not very well resolve

[1] The burthen becomes light by being well borne.



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the doubt which he hath raised in his Ethics, viz., How a man in the midst of King Priam's misfortunes can be called happy? yet I have long thought that there is no calamity so great that a Christian philosopher may not reasonably laugh at it; if the heathen Cicero, doubting of immortality (for so wise a man must have doubted of that which had such slender arguments to support it), could assert it as the office of wisdom, *Humanas res despicere atque infra se positas arbitrari.*[1]

"'Which passage, with much more to the same purpose, you will find in the third book of his Tusculan Questions.

"'With how much greater confidence may a good Christian despise, and even deride, all temporary and short transitory evils! If the poor wretch, who is trudging on to his miserable cottage, can laugh at the storms and tempests, the rain and whirlwinds, which surround him, while his richest hope is only that of rest; how much more chearfully must a man pass through such transient evils, whose spirits are buoyed up with the certain expectation of finding a noble palace and the most sumptuous entertainment ready to receive him! I do not much like the simile; but I cannot think of a better. And yet, inadequate as the simile is, we may, I think, from the actions of mankind, conclude that they will consider it as much too strong; for, in the case I have put of the entertainment, is there any man so tender or poor-spirited as not to despise, and often to deride, the fiercest of these inclemencies which I have mentioned? but in our journey to the glorious mansions of everlasting bliss, how severely is every little rub, every trifling accident, lamented!

[1] To look down on all human affairs as matters below his consideration.



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and if Fortune showers down any of her heavier storms upon us, how wretched do we presently appear to ourselves and to others! The reason of this can be no other than that we are not in earnest in our faith; at the best, we think with too little attention on this our great concern. While the most paultry matters of this world, even those pitiful trifles, those childish gewgaws, riches and honours, are transacted with the utmost earnestness and most serious application, the grand and weighty affair of immortality is postponed and disregarded, nor ever brought into the least competition with our affairs here. If one of my cloth should begin a discourse of heaven in the scenes of business or pleasure; in the court of requests, at Garraway's, or at White's; would he gain a hearing, unless, perhaps, of some sorry jester who would desire to ridicule him? would he not presently acquire the name of the mad parson, and be thought by all men worthy of Bedlam? or would he not be treated as the Romans treated their Aretalogi,[1] and considered in the light of a buffoon? But why should I mention those places of hurry and worldly pursuit? What attention do we engage even in the pulpit? Here, if a sermon be prolonged a little beyond the usual hour, doth it not set half the audience asleep? as I question not I have by this time both my children. Well, then, like a good-natured surgeon, who prepares his patient for a painful operation by endeavouring as much as he can to deaden his sensation, I will now communicate to you, in your slumbering condition, the news with which I threatened you. Your good mother, you are to know, is dead at last, and hath left her whole fortune to her elder daughter. —

[1] A set of beggarly philosophers who diverted great men at their table with burlesque discourses on virtue.



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This is all the ill news I have to tell you. Confess now, if you are awake, did you not expect it was much worse; did not you apprehend that your charming child was dead? Far from it, he is in perfect health, and the admiration of everybody: what is more, he will be taken care of, with the tenderness of a parent, till your return. What pleasure must this give you! if indeed anything can add to the happiness of a married couple who are extremely and deservedly fond of each other, and, as you write me, in perfect health. A superstitious heathen would have dreaded the malice of Nemesis in your situation; but as I am a Christian, I shall venture to add another circumstance to your felicity, by assuring you that you have, besides your wife, a faithful and zealous friend. Do not, therefore, my dear children, fall into that fault which the excellent Thucydides observes is too common in human nature, to bear heavily the being deprived of the smaller good, without conceiving, at the same time, any gratitude for the much greater blessings which we are suffered to enjoy. I have only farther to tell you, my son, that, when you call at Mr. Morand's, Rue Dauphine, you will find yourself worth a hundred pounds. Good Heaven! how much richer are you than millions of people who are in want of nothing! farewel, and know me for your sincere and affectionate friend.'

"There, madam," cries Booth, "how do you like the letter?"

"Oh! extremely," answered she: "the doctor is a charming man; I always loved dearly to hear him preach. I remember to have heard of Mrs. Harris's death above a year before I left the country, but



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never knew the particulars of her will before. I am extremely sorry for it, upon my honour."

"Oh, fy! madam," cries Booth; "have you so soon forgot the chief purport of the doctor's letter?"

"Ay, ay," cried she; "these are very pretty things to read, I acknowledge; but the loss of fortune is a serious matter; and I am sure a man of Mr. Booth's understanding must think so." "One consideration, I must own, madam," answered he, "a good deal baffled all the doctor's arguments. This was the concern for my little growing family, who must one day feel the loss; nor was I so easy upon Amelia's account as upon my own, though she herself put on the utmost chearfulness, and stretched her invention to the utmost to comfort me. But sure, madam, there is something in the doctor's letter to admire beyond the philosophy of it; what think you of that easy, generous, friendly manner, in which he sent me the hundred pounds?"

"Very noble and great indeed," replied she. "But pray go on with your story; for I long to hear the whole."



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## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### IN WHICH MR. BOOTH RELATES HIS RETURN TO ENGLAND.

NOTHING remarkable, as I remember, happened during our stay at Paris, which we left soon after and came to London. Here we rested only two days, and then, taking leave of our fellow-travellers, we set out for Wiltshire, my wife being so impatient to see the child which she had left behind her, that the child she carried with her was almost killed with the fatigue of the journey.

"We arrived at our inn late in the evening. Amelia, though she had no great reason to be pleased with any part of her sister's behaviour, resolved to behave to her as if nothing wrong had ever happened. She therefore sent a kind note to her the moment of our arrival, giving her her option, whether she would come to us at the inn, or whether we should that evening wait on her. The servant, after waiting an hour, brought us an answer, excusing her from coming to us so late, as she was disordered with a cold, and desiring my wife by no means to think of venturing out after the fatigue



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of her journey; saying, she would, on that account, defer the great pleasure of seeing her till the morning, without taking any more notice of your humble servant than if no such person had been in the world, though I had very civilly sent my compliments to her. I should not mention this trifle, if it was not to shew you the nature of the woman, and that it will be a kind of key to her future conduct.

"When the servant returned, the good doctor, who had been with us almost all the time of his absence, hurried us away to his house, where we presently found a supper and a bed prepared for us. My wife was eagerly desirous to see her child that night; but the doctor would not suffer it; and, as he was at nurse at a distant part of the town, and the doctor assured her he had seen him in perfect health that evening, she suffered herself at last to be dissuaded.

"We spent that evening in the most agreeable manner; for the doctor's wit and humour, joined to the highest chearfulness and good nature, made him the most agreeable companion in the world: and he was now in the highest spirits, which he was pleased to place to our account. We sat together to a very late hour; for so excellent is my wife's constitution, that she declared she was scarce sensible of any fatigue from her late journeys.

"Amelia slept not a wink all night, and in the morning early the doctor accompanied us to the little infant. The transports we felt on this occasion were really enchanting, nor can any but a fond



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parent conceive, I am certain, the least idea of them. Our imaginations suggested a hundred agreeable circumstances, none of which had, perhaps, any foundation. We made words and meaning out of every sound, and in every feature found out some resemblance to my Amelia, as she did to me.

"But I ask your pardon for dwelling on such incidents, and will proceed to scenes which, to most persons, will be more entertaining.

"We went hence to pay a visit to Miss Harris, whose reception of us was, I think, truly ridiculous; and, as you know the lady, I will endeavour to describe it particularly. At our first arrival we were ushered into a parlour, where we were suffered to wait almost an hour. At length the lady of the house appeared in deep mourning, with a face, if possible, more dismal than her dress, in which, however, there was every appearance of art. Her features were indeed skrewed up to the very height of grief. With this face, and in the most solemn gait, she approached Amelia, and coldly saluted her. After which she made me a very distant formal courtesy, and we all sat down. A short silence now ensued, which Miss Harris at length broke with a deep sigh, and said, 'Sister, here is a great alteration in this place since you saw it last; Heaven hath been pleased to take my poor mother to itself.'—(Here she wiped her eyes, and then continued.)—'I hope I know my duty, and have learned a proper resignation to the divine will; but something is to be allowed to grief for the best of mothers; for so she was to us both; and if at last she made any distinc-



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tion, she must have had her reasons for so doing. I am sure I can truly say I never wished, much less desired it.' The tears now stood in poor Amelia's eyes; indeed, she had paid too many already for the memory of so unnatural a parent. She answered, with the sweetness of an angel, that she was far from blaming her sister's emotions on so tender an occasion; that she heartily joined with her in her grief; for that nothing which her mother had done in the latter part of her life could efface the remembrance of that tenderness which she had formerly shewn her. Her sister caught hold of the word efface, and rung the changes upon it. — 'Efface!' cried she, 'O Miss Emily (for you must not expect me to repeat names that will be for ever odious), I wish indeed everything could be effaced. — Effaced! O that that was possible! we might then have still enjoyed my poor mother; for I am convinced she never recovered her grief on a certain occasion.' — Thus she ran on, and, after many bitter strokes upon her sister, at last directly charged her mother's death on my marriage with Amelia. I could be silent then no longer. I reminded her of the perfect reconciliation between us before my departure, and the great fondness which she expressed for me; nor could I help saying, in very plain terms, that if she had ever changed her opinion of me, as I was not conscious of having deserved such a change by my own behaviour, I was well convinced to whose good offices I owed it. Guilt hath very quick ears to an accusation. Miss Harris immediately answered to the charge. She said, such suspicions were no more than she ex-



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pected; that they were of a piece with every other part of my conduct, and gave her one consolation, that they served to account for her sister Emily's unkindness, as well to herself as to her poor deceased mother, and in some measure lessened the guilt of it with regard to her, since it was not easy to know how far a woman is in the power of her husband. My dear Amelia reddened at this reflection on me, and begged her sister to name any single instance of unkindness or disrespect in which she had ever offended. To this the other answered (I am sure I repeat her words, though I cannot mimic either the voice or air with which they were spoken) —'Pray, Miss Emily, which is to be the judge, yourself or that gentleman? I remember the time when I could have trusted to your judgment in any affair; but you are now no longer mistress of yourself, and are not answerable for your actions. Indeed, it is my constant prayer that your actions may not be imputed to you. It was the constant prayer of that blessed woman, my dear mother, who is now a saint above; a saint whose name I can never mention without a tear, though I find you can hear it without one. I cannot help observing some concern on so melancholy an occasion; it seems due to decency; but, perhaps (for I always wish to excuse you) you are forbid to cry.' The idea of being bid or forbid to cry struck so strongly on my fancy, that indignation only could have prevented me from laughing. But my narrative, I am afraid, begins to grow tedious. In short, after hearing, for near an hour, every malicious insinuation which a fertile genius could in-



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vent, we took our leave, and separated as persons who would never willingly meet again.

"The next morning after this interview Amelia received a long letter from Miss Harris; in which, after many bitter invectives against me, she excused her mother, alledging that she had been driven to do as she did in order to prevent Amelia's ruin, if her fortune had fallen into my hands. She likewise very remotely hinted that she would be only a trustee for her sister's children, and told her that on one condition only she would consent to live with her as a sister. This was, if she could by any means be separated from that man, as she was pleased to call me, who had caused so much mischief in the family.

"I was so enraged at this usage, that, had not Amelia intervened, I believe I should have applied to a magistrate for a search-warrant for that picture, which there was so much reason to suspect she had stolen; and which I am convinced, upon a search, we should have found in her possession."

"Nay, it is possible enough," cries Miss Matthews; "for I believe there is no wickedness of which the lady is not capable."

"This agreeable letter was succeeded by another of the like comfortable kind, which informed me that the company in which I was, being an additional one raised in the beginning of the war, was reduced; so that I was now a lieutenant on half-pay.

"Whilst we were meditating on our present situation the good doctor came to us. When we related to him the manner in which my sister had treated us, he cried out, 'Poor soul! I pity her heartily;'



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for this is the severest resentment he ever expresses; indeed, I have often heard him say that a wicked soul is the greatest object of compassion in the world." — A sentiment which we shall leave the reader a little time to digest.



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## CHAPTER TWELVE

### IN WHICH MR. BOOTH CONCLUDES HIS STORY.

THE next day the doctor set out for his parsonage, which was about thirty miles distant, whither Amelia and myself accompanied him, and where we stayed with him all the time of his residence there, being almost three months.

"The situation of the parish under my good friend's care is very pleasant. It is placed among meadows, washed by a clear trout-stream, and flanked on both sides with downs. His house, indeed, would not much attract the admiration of the virtuoso. He built it himself, and it is remarkable only for its plainness; with which the furniture so well agrees, that there is no one thing in it that may not be absolutely necessary, except books, and the prints of Mr. Hogarth, whom he calls a moral satirist.

"Nothing, however, can be imagined more agreeable than the life that the doctor leads in this homely house, which he calls his earthly paradise. All his parishioners, whom he treats as his children, regard him as their common father. Once in a week he constantly visits every house in the parish, examines, commends, and rebukes, as he finds occasion. This is practised likewise by his curate in his absence; and



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so good an effect is produced by this their care, that no quarrels ever proceed either to blows or law-suits; no beggar is to be found in the whole parish; nor did I ever hear a very profane oath all the time I lived in it.

"But to return from so agreeable a digression, to my own affairs, that are much less worth your attention. In the midst of all the pleasures I tasted in this sweet place and in the most delightful company, the woman and man whom I loved above all things, melancholy reflexions concerning my unhappy circumstances would often steal into my thoughts. My fortune was now reduced to less than forty pounds a-year; I had already two children, and my dear Amelia was again with child.

"One day the doctor found me sitting by myself, and employed in melancholy contemplations on this subject. He told me he had observed me growing of late very serious; that he knew the occasion, and neither wondered at nor blamed me. He then asked me if I had any prospect of going again into the army; if not, what scheme of life I proposed to myself?

"I told him that, as I had no powerful friends, I could have but little expectations in a military way; that I was as incapable of thinking of any other scheme, as all business required some knowledge or experience, and likewise money to set up with; of all which I was destitute.

"'You must know then, child,' said the doctor, 'that I have been thinking on this subject as well as you; for I can think, I promise you, with a pleasant



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countenance.' These were his words. 'As to the army, perhaps means might be found of getting you another commission; but my daughter seems to have a violent objection to it; and to be plain, I fancy you yourself will find no glory make you amends for your absence from her. And for my part,' said he, 'I never think those men wise who, for any worldly interest, forego the greatest happiness of their lives. If I mistake not,' says he, 'a country life, where you could be always together, would make you both much happier people.'

"I answered, that of all things I preferred it most; and I believed Amelia was of the same opinion.

"The doctor, after a little hesitation, proposed to me to turn farmer, and offered to let me his parsonage, which was then become vacant. He said it was a farm which required but little stock, and that little should not be wanting.

"I embraced this offer very eagerly, and with great thankfulness, and immediately repaired to Amelia to communicate it to her, and to know her sentiments.

"Amelia received the news with the highest transports of joy; she said that her greatest fear had always been of my entring again into the army. She was so kind as to say that all stations of life were equal to her, unless as one afforded her more of my company than another. 'And as to our children,' said she, 'let us breed them up to an humble fortune, and they will be contented with it; for none,' added my angel, 'deserve happiness, or, indeed, are capable of it, who make any particular station a necessary ingredient.'"



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"Thus, madam, you see me degraded from my former rank in life; no longer Captain Booth, but farmer Booth at your service.

"During my first year's continuance in this new scene of life, nothing, I think, remarkable happened; the history of one day would, indeed, be the history of the whole year."

"Well, pray then," said Miss Matthews, "do let us hear the history of that day; I have a strange curiosity to know how you could kill your time; and do, if possible, find out the very best day you can."

"If you command me, madam," answered Booth, "you must yourself be accountable for the dulness of the narrative. Nay, I believe, you have imposed a very difficult task on me; for the greatest happiness is incapable of description.

"I rose then, madam ——"

"O, the moment you waked, undoubtedly," said Miss Matthews.

"Usually," said he, "between five and six."

"I will have no usually," cried Miss Matthews, "you are confined to a day, and it is to be the best and happiest in the year."

"Nay, madam," cries Booth, "then I must tell you the day in which Amelia was brought to bed, after a painful and dangerous labour; for that I think was the happiest day of my life."

"I protest," said she, "you are become farmer Booth, indeed. What a happiness have you painted to my imagination! you put me in mind of a newspaper, where my lady such-a-one is delivered of a son, to the great joy of some illustrious family."



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"Why then, I do assure you, Miss Matthews," cries Booth, "I scarce know a circumstance that distinguished one day from another. The whole was one continued series of love, health, and tranquillity. Our lives resembled a calm sea." —

"The dullest of all ideas," cries the lady.

"I know," said he, "it must appear dull in description, for who can describe the pleasures which the morning air gives to one in perfect health; the flow of spirits which springs up from exercise; the delights which parents feel from the prattle and innocent follies of their children; the joy with which the tender smile of a wife inspires a husband; or lastly, the chearful, solid comfort which a fond couple enjoy in each other's conversation? — All these pleasures and every other of which our situation was capable we tasted in the highest degree. Our happiness was, perhaps, too great; for fortune seemed to grow envious of it, and interposed one of the most cruel accidents that could have befallen us by robbing us of our dear friend the doctor."

"I am sorry for it," said Miss Matthews. "He was indeed a valuable man, and I never heard of his death before."

"Long may it be before any one hears of it!" cries Booth. "He is, indeed, dead to us; but will, I hope, enjoy many happy years of life. You know, madam, the obligations he had to his patron the earl; indeed, it was impossible to be once in his company without hearing of them. I am sure you will neither wonder that he was chosen to attend the young lord in his travels as his tutor, nor that



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the good man, however disagreeable it might be (as in fact it was) to his inclination, should comply with the earnest request of his friend and patron.

"By this means I was bereft not only of the best companion in the world, but of the best counsellor; a loss of which I have since felt the bitter consequence; for no greater advantage, I am convinced, can arrive to a young man, who hath any degree of understanding, than an intimate converse with one of riper years, who is not only able to advise, but who knows the manner of advising. By this means alone, youth can enjoy the benefit of the experience of age, and that at a time of life when such experience will be of more service to a man than when he hath lived long enough to acquire it of himself.

"From want of my sage counsellor, I now fell into many errors. The first of these was in enlarging my business, by adding a farm of one hundred a year to the parsonage, in renting which I had also as bad a bargain as the doctor had before given me a good one. The consequence of which was, that whereas, at the end of the first year, I was worth upwards of fourscore pounds; at the end of the second I was near half that sum worse (as the phrase is) than nothing.

"A second folly I was guilty of in uniting families with the curate of the parish, who had just married, as my wife and I thought, a very good sort of a woman. We had not, however, lived one month together before I plainly perceived this good sort of a woman had taken a great prejudice against my Amelia, for which, if I had not known something



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of the human passions, and that high place which envy holds among them, I should not have been able to account, for, so far was my angel from having given her any cause of dislike, that she had treated her not only with civility, but kindness.

"Besides superiority in beauty, which, I believe, all the world would have allowed to Amelia, there was another cause of this envy, which I am almost ashamed to mention, as it may well be called my greatest folly. You are to know then, madam, that from a boy I had been always fond of driving a coach, in which I valued myself on having some skill. This, perhaps, was an innocent, but I allow it to have been a childish vanity. As I had an opportunity, therefore, of buying an old coach and harness very cheap (indeed they cost me but twelve pounds), and as I considered that the same horses which drew my waggons would likewise draw my coach, I resolved on indulging myself in the purchase.

"The consequence of setting up this poor old coach is inconceivable. Before this, as my wife and myself had very little distinguished ourselves from the other farmers and their wives, either in our dress or our way of living, they treated us as their equals; but now they began to consider us as elevating ourselves into a state of superiority, and immediately began to envy, hate, and declare war against us. The neighbouring little squires, too, were uneasy to see a poor renter become their equal in a matter in which they placed so much dignity; and, not doubting but it arose in me from the same ostentation,



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they began to hate me likewise, and to turn my equipage into ridicule, asserting that my horses, which were as well matched as any in the kingdom, were of different colours and sizes, with much more of that kind of wit, the only basis of which is lying.

"But what will appear most surprising to you, madam, was, that the curate's wife, who, being lame, had more use of the coach than my Amelia (indeed she seldom went to church in any other manner), was one of my bitterest enemies on the occasion. If she had ever any dispute with Amelia, which all the sweetness of my poor girl could not sometimes avoid, she was sure to introduce with a malicious sneer, 'Though my husband doth not keep a coach, madam.' Nay, she took this opportunity to upbraid my wife with the loss of her fortune, alledging that some folks might have had as good pretensions to a coach as other folks, and a better too, as they brought a better fortune to their husbands, but that all people had not the art of making brick without straw.

"You will wonder, perhaps, madam, how I can remember such stuff, which, indeed, was a long time only matter of amusement to both Amelia and myself; but we at last experienced the mischievous nature of envy, and that it tends rather to produce tragical than comical events. My neighbours now began to conspire against me. They nicknamed me in derision, the Squire Farmer. Whatever I bought, I was sure to buy dearer, and when I sold I was obliged to sell cheaper, than any other. In fact,



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they were all united, and, while they every day committed trespasses on my lands with impunity, if any of my cattle escaped into their fields, I was either forced to enter into a law-suit or to make amends fourfold for the damage sustained.

"The consequences of all this could be no other than that ruin which ensued. Without tiring you with particulars, before the end of four years I became involved in debt near three hundred pounds more than the value of all my effects. My landlord seized my stock for rent, and, to avoid immediate confinement in prison, I was forced to leave the country with all that I hold dear in the world, my wife and my poor little family.

"In this condition I arrived in town five or six days ago. I had just taken a lodging in the verge of the court, and had writ my dear Amelia word where she might find me, when she had settled her affairs in the best manner she could. That very evening, as I was returning home from a coffee-house, a fray happening in the street, I endeavoured to assist the injured party, when I was seized by the watch, and, after being confined all night in the round-house, was conveyed in the morning before a justice of peace, who committed me hither; where I should probably have starved, had I not from your hands found a most unaccountable preservation. — And here, give me leave to assure you, my dear Miss Matthews, that, whatever advantage I may have reaped from your misfortune, I sincerely lament it; nor would I have purchased any relief to myself at the price of seeing you in this dreadful place."



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He spake these last words with great tenderness; for he was a man of consummate good nature, and had formerly had much affection for this young lady; indeed, more than the generality of people are capable of entertaining for any person whatsoever.



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# BOOK IV

## CHAPTER ONE

### CONTAINING VERY MYSTERIOUS MATTER.

MISS MATTHEWS did not in the least fall short of Mr. Booth in expressions of tenderness. Her eyes, the most eloquent orators on such occasions, exerted their utmost force; and at the conclusion of his speech she cast a look as languishingly sweet as ever Cleopatra gave to Antony. In real fact, this Mr. Booth had been her first love, and had made those impressions on her young heart, which the learned in this branch of philosophy affirm, and perhaps truly, are never to be eradicated.

When Booth had finished his story a silence ensued of some minutes; an interval which the painter would describe much better than the writer. Some readers may, however, be able to make pretty pertinent conjectures by what I have said above, especially when they are told that Miss Matthews broke the silence by a sigh, and cried, "Why is Mr. Booth unwilling to allow me the happiness of thinking my misfortunes have been of some little advantage to him? sure the happy Amelia would not be so selfish to envy me that pleasure. No; not if she was as much the fondest as she is the happiest of women."



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"Good Heavens! madam," said he, "do you call my poor Amelia the happiest of women?" "Indeed I do," answered she briskly. "O Mr. Booth! there is a speck of white in her fortune, which, when it falls to the lot of a sensible woman, makes her full amends for all the crosses which can attend her. Perhaps she may not be sensible of it; but if it had been my blest fate — O Mr. Booth! could I have thought, when we were first acquainted, that the most agreeable man in the world had been capable of making the kind, the tender, the affectionate husband — the happy Amelia, in those days, was unknown; Heaven had not then given her a prospect of the happiness it intended her; but yet it did intend it her; for sure there is a fatality in the affairs of love; and the more I reflect on my own life, the more I am convinced of it. — O heavens! how a thousand little circumstances crowd into my mind! When you first marched into our town, you had then the colours in your hand; as you passed under the window where I stood, my glove, by accident, dropt into the street; you stoopt, took up my glove, and, putting it upon the spike belonging to your colours, lifted it up to the window. Upon this a young lady who stood by said, 'So, miss, the young officer hath accepted your challenge.' I blushed then, and I blush now, when I confess to you I thought you the prettiest young fellow I had ever seen; and, upon my soul, I believe you was then the prettiest fellow in the world." Booth here made a low bow, and cried, "O dear madam, how ignorant was I of my own happiness!" "Would you really have thought so?"



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answered she. "However, there is some politeness if there be no sincerity in what you say." — Here the governor of the enchanted castle interrupted them, and, entering the room without any ceremony, acquainted the lady and gentleman that it was locking-up time; and, addressing Booth by the name of captain, asked him if he would not please to have a bed; adding, that he might have one in the next room to the lady, but that it would come dear; for that he never let a bed in that room under a guinea, nor could he afford it cheaper to his father.

No answer was made to this proposal; but Miss Matthews, who had already learnt some of the ways of the house, said she believed Mr. Booth would like to drink a glass of something; upon which the governor immediately trumpeted forth the praises of his rack-punch, and, without waiting for any farther commands, presently produced a large bowl of that liquor.

The governor, having recommended the goodness of his punch by a hearty draught, began to revive the other matter, saying that he was just going to bed, and must first lock up. — "But suppose," said Miss Matthews, with a smile, "the captain and I should have a mind to sit up all night." — "With all my heart," said the governor; "but I expect a consideration for those matters. For my part, I don't enquire into what doth not concern me; but single and double are two things. If I lock up double I expect half a guinea, and I 'm sure the captain cannot think that 's out of the way; it is but the price of a bagnio."



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Miss Matthews's face became the colour of scarlet at those words. However, she mustered up her spirits, and, turning to Booth, said, "What say you, captain? for my own part, I had never less inclination to sleep; which hath the greater charms for you, the punch or the pillow?" — "I hope, madam," answered Booth, "you have a better opinion of me than to doubt my preferring Miss Matthews's conversation to either." — "I assure you," replied she, "it is no compliment to you to say I prefer yours to sleep at this time."

The governor, then, having received his fee, departed; and, turning the key, left the gentleman and the lady to themselves.

In imitation of him we will lock up likewise a scene which we do not think proper to expose to the eyes of the public. If any over-curious readers should be disappointed on this occasion, we will recommend such readers to the apologies with which certain gay ladies have lately been pleased to oblige the world, where they will possibly find everything recorded that past at this interval.

But, though we decline painting the scene, it is not our intention to conceal from the world the frailty of Mr. Booth, or of his fair partner, who certainly past that evening in a manner inconsistent with the strict rules of virtue and chastity.

To say the truth, we are much more concerned for the behaviour of the gentleman than of the lady, not only for his sake, but for the sake of the best woman in the world, whom we should be sorry to consider as yoked to a man of no worth nor honour.



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We desire, therefore, the good-natured and candid reader will be pleased to weigh attentively the several unlucky circumstances which concurred so critically, that Fortune seemed to have used her utmost endeavours to ensnare poor Booth's constancy. Let the reader set before his eyes a fine young woman, in a manner, a first love, conferring obligations and using every art to soften, to allure, to win, and to enflame; let him consider the time and place; let him remember that Mr. Booth was a young fellow in the highest vigour of life; and, lastly, let him add one single circumstance, that the parties were alone together; and then, if he will not acquit the defendant, he must be convicted, for I have nothing more to say in his defence.



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## CHAPTER TWO

THE LATTER PART OF WHICH WE EXPECT WILL PLEASE OUR READER BETTER THAN THE FORMER.

A WHOLE week did our lady and gentleman live in this criminal conversation, in which the happiness of the former was much more perfect than that of the latter; for, though the charms of Miss Matthews, and her excessive endearments, sometimes lulled every thought in the sweet lethargy of pleasure, yet in the intervals of his fits his virtue alarmed and roused him, and brought the image of poor injured Amelia to haunt and torment him. In fact, if we regard this world only, it is the interest of every man to be either perfectly good or completely bad. He had better destroy his conscience than gently wound it. The many bitter reflections which every bad action costs a mind in which there are any remains of goodness are not to be compensated by the highest pleasures which such an action can produce.

So it happened to Mr. Booth. Repentance never failed to follow his transgressions; and yet so perverse is our judgment, and so slippery is the descent of vice when once we are entered into it, the same



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crime which he now repented of became a reason for doing that which was to cause his future repentance; and he continued to sin on because he had begun. His repentance, however, returned still heavier and heavier, till, at last, it flung him into a melancholy, which Miss Matthews plainly perceived, and at which she could not avoid expressing some resentment in obscure hints and ironical compliments on Amelia's superiority to her whole sex, who could not cloy a gay young fellow by many years' possession. She would then repeat the compliments which others had made to her own beauty, and could not forbear once crying out, "Upon my soul, my dear Billy, I believe the chief disadvantage on my side is my superior fondness; for love, in the minds of men, hath one quality, at least, of a fever, which is to prefer coldness in the object. Confess, dear Will, is there not something vastly refreshing in the cool air of a prude?" Booth fetched a deep sigh, and begged her never more to mention Amelia's name. "O Will," cries she, "did that request proceed from the motive I could wish, I should be the happiest of womankind."—"You would not, sure, madam," said Booth, "desire a sacrifice which I must be a villain to make to any?"—"Desire!" answered she, "are there any bounds to the desires of love? have not I been sacrificed? hath not my first love been torn from my bleeding heart? I claim a prior right. As for sacrifices, I can make them too, and would sacrifice the whole world at the least call of my love."

Here she delivered a letter to Booth, which she



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had received within an hour, the contents of which were these: —

"DEAREST MADAM, — Those only who truly know what love is, can have any conception of the horrors I felt at hearing of your confinement at my arrival in town, which was this morning. I immediately sent my lawyer to enquire into the particulars, who brought me the agreeable news that the man, whose heart's blood ought not to be valued at the rate of a single hair of yours, is entirely out of all danger, and that you might be admitted to bail. I presently ordered him to go with two of my tradesmen, who are to be bound in any sum for your appearance, if he should be mean enough to prosecute you. Though you may expect my attorney with you soon, I would not delay sending this, as I hope the news will be agreeable to you. My chariot will attend at the same time to carry you wherever you please. You may easily guess what a violence I have done to myself in not waiting on you in person; but I, who know your delicacy, feared it might offend, and that you might think me ungenerous enough to hope from your distresses that happiness which I am resolved to owe to your free gift alone, when your good nature shall induce you to bestow on me what no man living can merit. I beg you will pardon all the contents of this hasty letter, and do me the honour of believing me,

Dearest madam,

Your most passionate admirer,

and most obedient humble servant,

DAMON."

Booth thought he had somewhere before seen the same hand, but in his present hurry of spirits could



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not recollect whose it was, nor did the lady give him any time for reflection; for he had scarce read the letter when she produced a little bit of paper and cried out, "Here, sir, here are the contents which he fears will offend me." She then put a bank-bill of a hundred pounds into Mr. Booth's hands, and asked him with a smile if he did not think she had reason to be offended with so much insolence?

Before Booth could return any answer the governor arrived, and introduced Mr. Rogers the attorney, who acquainted the lady that he had brought her discharge from her confinement, and that a chariot waited at the door to attend her wherever she pleased.

She received the discharge from Mr. Rogers, and said she was very much obliged to the gentleman who employed him, but that she would not make use of the chariot, as she had no notion of leaving that wretched place in a triumphant manner; in which resolution, when the attorney found her obstinate, he withdrew, as did the governor, with many bows and as many ladyships.

They were no sooner gone than Booth asked the lady why she would refuse the chariot of a gentleman who had behaved with such excessive respect? She looked earnestly upon him, and cried, "How unkind is that question! do you imagine I would go and leave you in such a situation? thou knowest but little of Calista. Why, do you think I would accept this hundred pounds from a man I dislike, unless it was to be serviceable to the man I love? I insist on your taking it as your own and using whatever you want of it."



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Booth protested in the solemnest manner that he would not touch a shilling of it, saying, he had already received too many obligations at her hands, and more than ever he should be able, he feared, to repay. "How unkind," answered she, "is every word you say, why will you mention obligations? love never confers any. It doth everything for its own sake. I am not therefore obliged to the man whose passion makes him generous; for I feel how inconsiderable the whole world would appear to me if I could throw it after my heart."

Much more of this kind past, she still pressing the bank-note upon him, and he as absolutely refusing, till Booth left the lady to dress herself, and went to walk in the area of the prison.

Miss Matthews now applied to the governor to know by what means she might procure the captain his liberty. The governor answered, "As he cannot get bail, it will be a difficult matter; and money to be sure there must be; for people no doubt expect to touch on these occasions. When prisoners have not wherewithal as the law requires to entitle themselves to justice, why they must be beholden to other people to give them their liberty; and people will not, to be sure, suffer others to be beholden to them for nothing, whereof there is good reason; for how should we all live if it was not for these things?" "Well, well," said she, "and how much will it cost?" "How much!" answered he, — "How much! — why, let me see." — Here he hesitated some time, and then answered "That for five guineas he would undertake to procure the captain his discharge." That being



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the sum which he computed to remain in the lady's pocket; for, as to the gentleman's, he had long been acquainted with the emptiness of it.

Miss Matthews, to whom money was as dirt (indeed she may be thought not to have known the value of it), delivered him the bank-bill, and bid him get it changed; for if the whole, says she, will procure him his liberty, he shall have it this evening.

"The whole, madam!" answered the governor, as soon as he had recovered his breath, for it almost forsook him at the sight of the black word hundred — "No, no; there might be people indeed — but I am not one of those. A hundred! no, nor nothing like it. — As for myself, as I said, I will be content with five guineas, and I am sure that 's little enough. What other people will expect I cannot exactly say. To be sure his worship's clerk will expect to touch pretty handsomely; as for his worship himself, he never touches anything, that is, not to speak of; but then the constable will expect something, and the watchman must have something, and the lawyers on both sides, they must have their fees for finishing." — "Well," said she, "I leave all to you. If it costs me twenty pounds I will have him discharged this afternoon. — But you must give his discharge into my hands without letting the captain know anything of the matter."

The governor promised to obey her commands in every particular; nay, he was so very industrious, that, though dinner was just then coming upon the table, at her earnest request he set out immediately



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on the purpose, and went as he said in pursuit of the lawyer.

All the other company assembled at table as usual, where poor Booth was the only person out of spirits. This was imputed by all present to a wrong cause; nay, Miss Matthews herself either could not or would not suspect that there was anything deeper than the despair of being speedily discharged that lay heavy on his mind.

However, the mirth of the rest, and a pretty liberal quantity of punch, which he swallowed after dinner (for Miss Matthews had ordered a very large bowl at her own expense to entertain the good company at her farewell), so far exhilarated his spirits, that when the young lady and he retired to their tea he had all the marks of gayety in his countenance, and his eyes sparkled with good humour.

The gentleman and lady had spent about two hours in tea and conversation, when the governor returned, and privately delivered to the lady the discharge for her friend, and the sum of eighty-two pounds five shillings; the rest having been, he said, disbursed in the business, of which he was ready at any time to render an exact account.

Miss Matthews being again alone with Mr. Booth, she put the discharge into his hands, desiring him to ask her no questions; and adding, "I think, sir, we have neither of us now anything more to do at this place." She then summoned the governor, and ordered a bill of that day's expense, for long scores were not usual there; and at the same time ordered a hackney coach, without having yet determined



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whither she would go, but fully determined she was, wherever she went, to take Mr. Booth with her.

The governor was now approaching with a long roll of paper, when a faint voice was heard to cry out hastily, "Where is he?"—and presently a female spectre, all pale and breathless, rushed into the room, and fell into Mr. Booth's arms, where she immediately fainted away.

Booth made a shift to support his lovely burden; though he was himself in a condition very little different from hers. Miss Matthews likewise, who presently recollected the face of Amelia, was struck motionless with the surprize, nay, the governor himself, though not easily moved at sights of horror, stood aghast, and neither offered to speak nor stir.

Happily for Amelia, the governess of the mansions had, out of curiosity, followed her into the room, and was the only useful person present on this occasion: she immediately called for water, and ran to the lady's assistance, fell to loosening her stays, and performed all the offices proper at such a season; which had so good an effect, that Amelia soon recovered the disorder which the violent agitation of her spirits had caused, and found herself alive and awake in her husband's arms.

Some tender caresses and a soft whisper or two passed privately between Booth and his lady; nor was it without great difficulty that poor Amelia put some restraint on her fondness in a place so improper for a tender interview. She now cast her eyes round the room, and, fixing them on Miss



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Matthews, who stood like a statue, she soon recollected her, and, addressing her by her name, said, "Sure, madam, I cannot be mistaken in those features; though meeting you here might almost make me suspect my memory."

Miss Matthews's face was now all covered with scarlet. The reader may easily believe she was on no account pleased with Amelia's presence; indeed, she expected from her some of those insults of which virtuous women are generally so liberal to a frail sister: but she was mistaken; Amelia was not one

> Who thought the nation ne'er would thrive,
> Till all the whores were burnt alive.

Her virtue could support itself with its own intrinsic worth, without borrowing any assistance from the vices of other women; and she considered their natural infirmities as the objects of pity, not of contempt or abhorrence.

When Amelia therefore perceived the visible confusion in Miss Matthews she presently called to remembrance some stories which she had imperfectly heard; for, as she was not naturally attentive to scandal, and had kept very little company since her return to England, she was far from being a mistress of the lady's whole history. However, she had heard enough to impute her confusion to the right cause; she advanced to her, and told her, she was extremely sorry to meet her in such a place, but hoped that no very great misfortune was the occasion of it.

Miss Matthews began, by degrees, to recover her



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spirits. She answered, with a reserved air, "I am much obliged to you, madam, for your concern; we are all liable to misfortunes in this world. Indeed, I know not why I should be much ashamed of being in any place where I am in such good company."

Here Booth interposed. He had before acquainted Amelia in a whisper that his confinement was at an end. "The unfortunate accident, my dear," said he, "which brought this young lady to this melancholy place is entirely determined; and she is now as absolutely at her liberty as myself."

Amelia, imputing the extreme coldness and reserve of the lady to the cause already mentioned, advanced still more and more in proportion as she drew back; till the governor, who had withdrawn some time, returned, and acquainted Miss Matthews that her coach was at the door; upon which the company soon separated. Amelia and Booth went together in Amelia's coach, and poor Miss Matthews was obliged to retire alone, after having satisfied the demands of the governor, which in one day only had amounted to a pretty considerable sum; for he, with great dexterity, proportioned the bills to the abilities of his guests.

It may seem, perhaps, wonderful to some readers, that Miss Matthews should have maintained that cold reserve towards Amelia, so as barely to keep within the rules of civility, instead of embracing an opportunity which seemed to offer of gaining some degree of intimacy with a wife whose husband she was so fond of; but, besides that her spirits were entirely disconcerted by so sudden and unexpected



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a disappointment; and besides the extreme horrors which she conceived at the presence of her rival, there is, I believe, something so outrageously suspicious in the nature of all vice, especially when joined with any great degree of pride, that the eyes of those whom we imagine privy to our failings are intolerable to us, and we are apt to aggravate their opinions to our disadvantage far beyond the reality.



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## CHAPTER THREE

CONTAINING WISE OBSERVATIONS OF THE AUTHOR, AND OTHER MATTERS.

THERE is nothing more difficult than to lay down any fixed and certain rules for happiness; or indeed to judge with any precision of the happiness of others from the knowledge of external circumstances. There is sometimes a little speck of black in the brightest and gayest colours of fortune, which contaminates and deadens the whole. On the contrary, when all without looks dark and dismal, there is often a secret ray of light within the mind, which turns everything to real joy and gladness.

I have in the course of my life seen many occasions to make this observation, and Mr. Booth was at present a very pregnant instance of its truth. He was just delivered from a prison, and in the possession of his beloved wife and children; and (which might be imagined greatly to augment his joy) fortune had done all this for him within an hour, without giving him the least warning or reasonable expectation of the strange reverse in his circumstances; and yet it is certain that there were very few men in the world more seriously miserable than he was at this instant. A deep melancholy



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seized his mind, and cold damp sweats overspread his person, so that he was scarce animated; and poor Amelia, instead of a fond warm husband, bestowed her caresses on a dull lifeless lump of clay. He endeavoured, however, at first, as much as possible, to conceal what he felt, and attempted what is the hardest of all tasks, to act the part of a happy man; but he found no supply of spirits to carry on this deceit, and would have probably sunk under his attempt, had not poor Amelia's simplicity helped him to another fallacy, in which he had much better success.

This worthy woman very plainly perceived the disorder in her husband's mind; and, having no doubt of the cause of it, especially when she saw the tears stand in his eyes at the sight of his children, threw her arms round his neck, and, embracing him with rapturous fondness, cried out, "My dear Billy, let nothing make you uneasy. Heaven will, I doubt not, provide for us and these poor babes. Great fortunes are not necessary to happiness. For my own part, I can level my mind with any state; and for those poor little things, whatever condition of life we breed them to, that will be sufficient to maintain them in. How many thousands abound in affluence whose fortunes are much lower than ours! for it is not from nature, but from education and habit, that our wants are chiefly derived. Make yourself easy, therefore, my dear love; for you have a wife who will think herself happy with you, and endeavour to make you so, in any situation. Fear nothing, Billy, industry will always provide us a wholesome meal;



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and I will take care that neatness and chearfulness shall make it a pleasant one."

Booth presently took the cue which she had given him. He fixed his eyes on her for a minute with great earnestness and inexpressible tenderness; and then cried, "O my Amelia, how much are you my superior in every perfection! how wise, how great, how noble are your sentiments! why can I not imitate what I so much admire? why can I not look with your constancy on those dear little pledges of our loves? All my philosophy is baffled with the thought that my Amelia's children are to struggle with a cruel, hard, unfeeling world, and to buffet those waves of fortune which have overwhelmed their father. — Here, I own I want your firmness, and am not without an excuse for wanting it; for am I not the cruel cause of all your wretchedness? have I not stept between you and fortune, and been the cursed obstacle to all your greatness and happiness?"

"Say not so, my love," answered she. "Great I might have been, but never happy with any other man. Indeed, dear Billy, I laugh at the fears you formerly raised in me; what seemed so terrible at a distance, now it approaches nearer, appears to have been a mere bugbear — and let this comfort you, that I look on myself at this day as the happiest of women; nor have I done anything which I do not rejoice in, and would, if I had the gift of prescience, do again."

Booth was so overcome with this behaviour, that he had no words to answer. To say the truth, it was difficult to find any worthy of the occasion. He



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threw himself prostrate at her feet, whence poor Amelia was forced to use all her strength as well as entreaties to raise and place him in his chair.

Such is ever the fortitude of perfect innocence, and such the depression of guilt in minds not utterly abandoned. Booth was naturally of a sanguine temper; nor would any such apprehensions as he mentioned have been sufficient to have restrained his joy at meeting with his Amelia. In fact, a reflection on the injury he had done her was the sole cause of his grief. This it was that enervated his heart, and threw him into agonies, which all that profusion of heroic tenderness that the most excellent of women intended for his comfort served only to heighten and aggravate; as the more she rose in his admiration, the more she quickened his sense of his own unworthiness.

After a disagreeable evening, the first of that kind that he had ever passed with his Amelia, in which he had the utmost difficulty to force a little chearfulness, and in which her spirits were at length overpowered by discerning the oppression on his, they retired to rest, or rather to misery, which need not be described.

The next morning at breakfast, Booth began to recover a little from his melancholy, and to taste the company of his children. He now first thought of enquiring of Amelia by what means she had discovered the place of his confinement. Amelia, after gently rebuking him for not having himself acquainted her with it, informed him that it was known all over the country, and that she had traced the original of it to her sister; who had spread the news with a mali-



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cious joy, and added a circumstance which would have frightened her to death, had not her knowledge of him made her give little credit to it, which was, that he was committed for murder. But, though she had discredited this part, she said the not hearing from him during several successive posts made her too apprehensive of the rest; that she got a conveyance therefore for herself and children to Salisbury, from whence the stage coach had brought them to town; and, having deposited the children at his lodging, of which he had sent her an account on his first arrival in town, she took a hack, and came directly to the prison where she heard he was, and where she found him.

Booth excused himself, and with truth, as to his not having writ; for, in fact, he had writ twice from the prison, though he had mentioned nothing of his confinement; but, as he sent away his letters after nine at night, the fellow to whom they were entrusted had burnt them both for the sake of putting the twopence in his own pocket, or rather in the pocket of the keeper of the next gin-shop.

As to the account which Amelia gave him, it served rather to raise than to satisfy his curiosity. He began to suspect that some person had seen both him and Miss Matthews together in the prison, and had confounded her case with his; and this the circumstance of murder made the more probable. But who this person should be he could not guess. After giving himself, therefore, some pains in forming conjectures to no purpose, he was forced to rest contented with his ignorance of the real truth.



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Two or three days now passed, without producing anything remarkable; unless it were that Booth more and more recovered his spirits, and had now almost regained his former degree of chearfulness, when the following letter arrived, again to torment him:

"DEAR BILLY, — To convince you I am the most reasonable of women, I have given you up three whole days to the unmolested possession of my fortunate rival; I can refrain no longer from letting you know that I lodge in Dean Street, not far from the church, at the sign of the Pelican and Trumpet, where I expect this evening to see you.

"Believe me I am, with more affection than any other woman in the world can be, my dear Billy,

Your affectionate, fond, doating

F. MATTHEWS."

Booth tore the letter with rage, and threw it into the fire, resolving never to visit the lady more, unless it was to pay her the money she had lent him, which he was determined to do the very first opportunity, for it was not at present in his power.

This letter threw him back into his fit of dejection, in which he had not continued long when a packet from the country brought him the following from his friend Dr. Harrison:

"*Lyons, January* 21, N. S.

"SIR, — Though I am now on my return home, I have taken up my pen to communicate to you some news I have heard from England, which gives me much uneasiness, and concerning which I can indeed deliver



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my sentiments with much more ease this way than any other. In my answer to your last, I very freely gave you my opinion, in which it was my misfortune to disapprove of every step you had taken; but those were all pardonable errors. Can you be so partial to yourself, upon cool and sober reflexion, to think what I am going to mention is so? I promise you, it appears to me a folly of so monstrous a kind, that, had I heard it from any but a person of the highest honour, I should have rejected it as utterly incredible. I hope you already guess what I am about to name; since, Heaven forbid, your conduct should afford you any choice of such gross instances of weakness. In a word, then, you have set up an equipage. What shall I invent in your excuse, either to others or to myself? In truth, I can find no excuse for you, and, what is more, I am certain you can find none for yourself. I must deal therefore very plainly and sincerely with you. Vanity is always contemptible; but when joined with dishonesty, it becomes odious and detestable. At whose expence are you to support this equipage? is it not entirely at the expence of others? and will it not finally end in that of your poor wife and children? you know you are two years in arrears to me. If I could impute this to any extraordinary or common accident I think I should never have mentioned it; but I will not suffer my money to support the ridiculous, and, I must say, criminal vanity of any one. I expect, therefore, to find, at my return, that you have either discharged my whole debt, or your equipage. Let me beg you seriously to consider your circumstances and condition in life, and to remember that your situation will not justify any the least unnecessary expence. *Simply to be poor*, says my favourite Greek historian, *was not held scandalous by the*



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*wise Athenians, but highly so to owe that poverty to our own indiscretion.*

"Present my affections to Mrs. Booth, and be assured that I shall not, without great reason, and great pain too, ever cease to be,

Your most faithful friend,

R. HARRISON."

Had this letter come at any other time, it would have given Booth the most sensible affliction; but so totally had the affair of Miss Matthews possessed his mind, that, like a man in the most raging fit of the gout, he was scarce capable of any additional torture; nay, he even made an use of this latter epistle, as it served to account to Amelia for that concern which he really felt on another account. The poor deceived lady, therefore, applied herself to give him comfort where he least wanted it. She said he might easily perceive that the matter had been misrepresented to the doctor, who would not, she was sure, retain the least anger against him when he knew the real truth.

After a short conversation on this subject, in which Booth appeared to be greatly consoled by the arguments of his wife, they parted. He went to take a walk in the Park, and she remained at home to prepare him his dinner.

He was no sooner departed than his little boy, not quite six years old, said to Amelia, "La! mamma, what is the matter with poor papa, what makes him look so as if he was going to cry? he is not half so merry as he used to be in the country." Amelia answered, "Oh! my dear, your papa is only a little



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thoughtful, he will be merry again soon." — Then looking fondly on her children, she burst into an agony of tears, and cried, "Oh Heavens; what have these poor little infants done? why will the barbarous world endeavour to starve them, by depriving us of our only friend? — O my dear, your father is ruined, and we are undone!" — The children presently accompanied their mother's tears, and the daughter cried — "Why, will anybody hurt poor papa? hath he done any harm to anybody?" — "No, my dear child," said the mother; "he is the best man in the world, and therefore they hate him." Upon which the boy, who was extremely sensible at his years, answered, "Nay, mamma, how can that be? have not you often told me that if I was good everybody would love me?" "All good people will," answered she. "Why don't they love papa then?" replied the child, "for I am sure he is very good." "So they do, my dear," said the mother, "but there are more bad people in the world, and they will hate you for your goodness." "Why then, bad people," cries the child, "are loved by more than the good." — "No matter for that, my dear," said she; "the love of one good person is more worth having than that of a thousand wicked ones; nay, if there was no such person in the world, still you must be a good boy; for there is one in Heaven who will love you, and his love is better for you than that of all mankind."

This little dialogue, we are apprehensive, will be read with contempt by many; indeed, we should not have thought it worth recording, was it not for the



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excellent example which Amelia here gives to all mothers. This admirable woman never let a day pass without instructing her children in some lesson of religion and morality. By which means she had, in their tender minds, so strongly annexed the ideas of fear and shame to every idea of evil of which they were susceptible, that it must require great pains and length of habit to separate them. Though she was the tenderest of mothers, she never suffered any symptom of malevolence to shew itself in their most trifling actions without discouragement, without rebuke, and, if it broke forth with any rancour, without punishment. In which she had such success, that not the least mark[s] of pride, envy, malice, or spite discovered itself in any of their little words or deeds.



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## CHAPTER FOUR

IN WHICH AMELIA APPEARS IN NO UNAMIABLE LIGHT.

AMELIA, with the assistance of a little girl, who was their only servant, had drest her dinner, and she had likewise drest herself as neat as any lady who had a regular sett of servants could have done, when Booth returned, and brought with him his friend James, whom he had met with in the Park; and who, as Booth absolutely refused to dine away from his wife, to whom he had promised to return, had invited himself to dine with him. Amelia had none of that paultry pride which possesses so many of her sex, and which disconcerts their tempers, and gives them the air and looks of furies, if their husbands bring in an unexpected guest, without giving them timely warning to provide a sacrifice to their own vanity. Amelia received her husband's friend with the utmost complaisance and good humour: she made indeed some apology for the homeliness of her dinner; but it was politely turned as a compliment to Mr. James's friendship, which could carry him where he was sure of being so ill entertained; and gave not the least hint how magnificently she would have provided *had she expected the favour of so much good company.* A phrase which is generally meant to contain not only



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an apology for the lady of the house, but a tacit satire on her guests for their intrusion, and is at least a strong insinuation that they are not welcome.

Amelia failed not to enquire very earnestly after her old friend Mrs. James, formerly Miss Bath, and was very sorry to find that she was not in town. The truth was, as James had married out of a violent liking of, or appetite to, her person, possession had surfeited him, and he was now grown so heartily tired of his wife, that she had very little of his company; she was forced therefore to content herself with being the mistress of a large house and equipage in the country ten months in the year by herself. The other two he indulged her with the diversions of the town; but then, though they lodged under the same roof, she had little more of her husband's society than if they had been one hundred miles apart. With all this, as she was a woman of calm passions, she made herself contented; for she had never had any violent affection for James: the match was of the prudent kind, and to her advantage; for his fortune, by the death of an uncle, was become very considerable; and she had gained everything by the bargain but a husband, which her constitution suffered her to be very well satisfied without.

When Amelia, after dinner, retired to her children, James began to talk to his friend concerning his affairs. He advised Booth very earnestly to think of getting again into the army, in which he himself had met with such success, that he had obtained the command of a regiment to which his brother-in-law



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was lieutenant-colonel. These preferments they both owed to the favour of fortune only; for, though there was no objection to either of their military characters, yet neither of them had any extraordinary desert; and, if merit in the service was a sufficient recommendation, Booth, who had been twice wounded in the siege, seemed to have the fairest pretensions; but he remained a poor half-pay lieutenant, and the others were, as we have said, one of them a lieutenant-colonel, and the other had a regiment. Such rises we often see in life, without being able to give any satisfactory account of the means, and therefore ascribe them to the good fortune of the person.

Both Colonel James and his brother-in-law were members of parliament; for, as the uncle of the former had left him, together with his estate, an almost certain interest in a borough, so he chose to confer this favour on Colonel Bath; a circumstance which would have been highly immaterial to mention here, but as it serves to set forth the goodness of James, who endeavoured to make up in kindness to the family what he wanted in fondness for his wife.

Colonel James then endeavoured all in his power to persuade Booth to think again of a military life, and very kindly offered him his interest towards obtaining him a company in the regiment under his command. Booth must have been a madman, in his present circumstances, to have hesitated one moment at accepting such an offer, and he well knew Amelia, notwithstanding her aversion to the army, was much too wise to make the least scruple of giving her con-



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sent. Nor was he, as it appeared afterwards, mistaken in his opinion of his wife's understanding; for she made not the least objection when it was communicated to her, but contented herself with an express stipulation, that wherever he was commanded to go (for the regiment was now abroad) she would accompany him.

Booth, therefore, accepted his friend's proposal with a profusion of acknowledgments; and it was agreed that Booth should draw up a memorial of his pretensions, which Colonel James undertook to present to some man of power, and to back it with all the force he had.

Nor did the friendship of the colonel stop here. "You will excuse me, dear Booth," said he, "if, after what you told me" (for he had been very explicit in revealing his affairs to him), "I suspect you must want money at this time. If that be the case, as I am certain it must be, I have fifty pieces at your service." This generosity brought the tears into Booth's eyes; and he at length confest that he had not five guineas in the house; upon which James gave him a bank-bill for twenty pounds, and said he would give him thirty more the next time he saw him.

Thus did this generous colonel (for generous he really was to the highest degree) restore peace and comfort to this little family; and by this act of beneficence make two of the worthiest people two of the happiest that evening.

Here, reader, give me leave to stop a minute, to lament that so few are to be found of this benign



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disposition; that, while wantonness, vanity, avarice, and ambition are every day rioting and triumphing in the follies and weakness, the ruin and desolation of mankind, scarce one man in a thousand is capable of tasting the happiness of others. Nay, give me leave to wonder that pride, which is constantly struggling, and often imposing on itself, to gain some little pre-eminence, should so seldom hint to us the only certain as well as laudable way of setting ourselves above another man, and that is, by becoming his benefactor.



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## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONTAINING AN EULOGIUM UPON INNOCENCE, AND OTHER GRAVE MATTERS.

BOOTH past that evening, and all the succeeding day, with his Amelia, without the interruption of almost a single thought concerning Miss Matthews, after having determined to go on the Sunday, the only day he could venture without the verge in the present state of his affairs, and pay her what she had advanced for him in the prison. But she had not so long patience; for the third day, while he was sitting with Amelia, a letter was brought to him. As he knew the hand, he immediately put it into his pocket unopened, not without such an alteration in his countenance, that had Amelia, who was then playing with one of the children, cast her eyes towards him, she must have remarked it. This accident, however, luckily gave him time to recover himself; for Amelia was so deeply engaged with the little one, that she did not even remark the delivery of the letter. The maid soon after returned into the room, saying, the chairman desired to know if there was any answer to the letter. — "What letter?" cries Booth. — "The letter I gave you just now," answered the girl. — "Sure," cries Booth, "the child is mad, you gave



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me no letter."—"Yes, indeed, I did, sir," said the poor girl. "Why then as sure as fate," cries Booth, "I threw it into the fire in my reverie; why, child, why did you not tell me it was a letter? bid the chairman come up, stay, I will go down myself; for he will otherwise dirt the stairs with his feet."

Amelia was gently chiding the girl for her carelessness when Booth returned, saying it was very true that she had delivered him a letter from Colonel James, and that perhaps it might be of consequence. "However," says he, "I will step to the coffee-house, and send him an account of this strange accident, which I know he will pardon in my present situation."

Booth was overjoyed at this escape, which poor Amelia's total want of all jealousy and suspicion made it very easy for him to accomplish; but his pleasure was considerably abated when, upon opening the letter, he found it to contain, mixed with several very strong expressions of love, some pretty warm ones of the upbraiding kind; but what most alarmed him was a hint that it was in her (Miss Matthews's) power to make Amelia as miserable as herself. Besides the general knowledge of

——— *Furens quid fœmina possit,*

he had more particular reasons to apprehend the rage of a lady who had given so strong an instance how far she could carry her revenge. She had already sent a chairman to his lodgings with a positive command not to return without an answer to her letter. This might of itself have possibly occasioned



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a discovery; and he thought he had great reason to fear that, if she did not carry matters so far as purposely and avowedly to reveal the secret to Amelia, her indiscretion would at least effect the discovery of that which he would at any price have concealed. Under these terrors he might, I believe, be considered as the most wretched of human beings.

O innocence, how glorious and happy a portion art thou to the breast that possesses thee! thou fearest neither the eyes nor the tongues of men. Truth, the most powerful of all things, is thy strongest friend; and the brighter the light is in which thou art displayed, the more it discovers thy transcendent beauties. Guilt, on the contrary, like a base thief, suspects every eye that beholds him to be privy to his transgressions, and every tongue that mentions his name to be proclaiming them. Fraud and falsehood are his weak and treacherous allies; and he lurks trembling in the dark, dreading every ray of light, lest it should discover him, and give him up to shame and punishment.

While Booth was walking in the Park with all these horrors in his mind he again met his friend Colonel James, who soon took notice of that deep concern which the other was incapable of hiding. After some little conversation, Booth said, "My dear colonel, I am sure I must be the most insensible of men if I did not look on you as the best and the truest friend; I will, therefore, without scruple, repose a confidence in you of the highest kind. I have often made you privy to my necessities, I will



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now acquaint you with my shame, provided you have leisure enough to give me a hearing: for I must open to you a long history, since I will not reveal my fault without informing you, at the same time, of those circumstances which, I hope, will in some measure excuse it."

The colonel very readily agreed to give his friend a patient hearing. So they walked directly to a coffee-house at the corner of Spring-Garden, where, being in a room by themselves, Booth opened his whole heart, and acquainted the colonel with his amour with Miss Matthews, from the very beginning to his receiving that letter which had caused all his present uneasiness, and which he now delivered into his friend's hand.

The colonel read the letter very attentively twice over (he was silent indeed long enough to have read it oftener); and then, turning to Booth, said, "Well, sir, and is it so grievous a calamity to be the object of a young lady's affection; especially of one whom you allow to be so extremely handsome?" "Nay, but, my dear friend," cries Booth, "do not jest with me; you who know my Amelia." "Well, my dear friend," answered James, "and you know Amelia and this lady too. But what would you have me do for you?" "I would have you give me your advice," says Booth, "by what method I shall get rid of this dreadful woman without a discovery." — "And do you really," cries the other, "desire to get rid of her?" "Can you doubt it," said Booth, "after what I have communicated to you, and after what you yourself have seen in my family? for I



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hope, notwithstanding this fatal slip, I do not appear to you in the light of a profligate." "Well," answered James, "and, whatever light I may appear to you in, if you are really tired of the lady, and if she be really what you have represented her, I'll endeavour to take her off your hands; but I insist upon it that you do not deceive me in any particular." Booth protested in the most solemn manner that every word which he had spoken was strictly true; and being asked whether he would give his honour never more to visit the lady, he assured James that he never would. He then, at his friend's request, delivered him Miss Matthews's letter, in which was a second direction to her lodgings, and declared to him that, if he could bring him safely out of this terrible affair, he should think himself to have a still higher obligation to his friendship than any which he had already received from it.

Booth pressed the colonel to go home with him to dinner; but he excused himself, being, as he said, already engaged. However, he undertook in the afternoon to do all in his power that Booth should receive no more alarms from the quarter of Miss Matthews, whom the colonel undertook to pay all the demands she had on his friend. They then separated. The colonel went to dinner at the King's Arms, and Booth returned in high spirits to meet his Amelia.

The next day, early in the morning, the colonel came to the coffee-house and sent for his friend, who lodged but at a little distance. The colonel told him he had a little exaggerated the lady's beauty;



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however, he said, he excused that, "for you might think, perhaps," cries he, "that your inconstancy to the finest woman in the world might want some excuse. Be that as it will," said he, "you may make yourself easy, as it will be, I am convinced, your own fault, if you have ever any further molestation from Miss Matthews."

Booth poured forth very warmly a great profusion of gratitude on this occasion; and nothing more anywise material passed at this interview, which was very short, the colonel being in a great hurry, as he had, he said, some business of very great importance to transact that morning.

The colonel had now seen Booth twice without remembering to give him the thirty pounds. This the latter imputed intirely to forgetfulness; for he had always found the promises of the former to be equal in value with the notes or bonds of other people. He was more surprized at what happened the next day, when, meeting his friend in the Park, he received only a cold salute from him; and though he past him five or six times, and the colonel was walking with a single officer of no great rank, and with whom he seemed in no earnest conversation, yet could not Booth, who was alone, obtain any further notice from him.

This gave the poor man some alarm; though he could scarce persuade himself that there was any design in all this coldness or forgetfulness. Once he imagined that he had lessened himself in the colonel's opinion by having discovered his inconstancy to Amelia; but the known character of the



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other presently cured him of his suspicion, for he was a perfect libertine with regard to women; that being indeed the principal blemish in his character, which otherwise might have deserved much commendation for good-nature, generosity, and friendship. But he carried this one to a most unpardonable height; and made no scruple of openly declaring that, if he ever liked a woman well enough to be uneasy on her account, he would cure himself, if he could, by enjoying her, whatever might be the consequence.

Booth could not therefore be persuaded that the colonel would so highly resent in another a fault of which he was himself most notoriously guilty. After much consideration he could derive this behaviour from nothing better than a capriciousness in his friend's temper, from a kind of inconstancy of mind, which makes men grow weary of their friends with no more reason than they often are of their mistresses. To say the truth, there are jilts in friendship as well as in love; and, by the behaviour of some men in both, one would almost imagine that they industriously sought to gain the affections of others with a view only of making the parties miserable.

This was the consequence of the colonel's behaviour to Booth. Former calamities had afflicted him, but this almost distracted him; and the more so as he was not able well to account for such conduct, nor to conceive the reason of it.

Amelia, at his return, presently perceived the disturbance in his mind, though he endeavoured with



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his utmost power to hide it; and he was at length prevailed upon by her entreaties to discover to her the cause of it, which she no sooner heard than she applied as judicious a remedy to his disordered spirits as either of those great mental physicians, Tully or Aristotle, could have thought of. She used many arguments to persuade him that he was in an error, and had mistaken forgetfulness and carelessness for a designed neglect.

But, as this physic was only eventually good, and as its efficacy depended on her being in the right, a point in which she was not apt to be too positive, she thought fit to add some consolation of a more certain and positive kind. "Admit," said she, "my dear, that Mr. James should prove the unaccountable person you have suspected, and should, without being able to alledge any cause, withdraw his friendship from you (for surely the accident of burning his letter is too trifling and ridiculous to mention), why should this grieve you? the obligations he hath conferred on you, I allow, ought to make his misfortunes almost your own; but they should not, I think, make you see his faults so very sensibly, especially when, by one of the greatest faults in the world committed against yourself, he hath considerably lessened all obligations; for sure, if the same person who hath contributed to my happiness at one time doth everything in his power maliciously and wantonly to make me miserable at another, I am very little obliged to such a person. And let it be a comfort to my dear Billy, that, however other friends may prove false and fickle to him, he hath



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one friend, whom no inconstancy of her own, nor any change of his fortune, nor time, nor age, nor sickness, nor any accident, can ever alter; but who will esteem, will love, and doat on him for ever." So saying, she flung her snowy arms about his neck, and gave him a caress so tender, that it seemed almost to balance all the malice of his fate.

And, indeed, the behaviour of Amelia would have made him completely happy, in defiance of all adverse circumstances, had it not been for those bitter ingredients which he himself had thrown into his cup, and which prevented him from truly relishing his Amelia's sweetness, by cruelly reminding him how unworthy he was of this excellent creature.

Booth did not long remain in the dark as to the conduct of James, which, at first, appeared to him to be so great a mystery; for this very afternoon he received a letter from Miss Matthews which unravelled the whole affair. By this letter, which was full of bitterness and upbraiding, he discovered that James was his rival with that lady, and was, indeed, the identical person who had sent the hundred-pound note to Miss Matthews, when in the prison. He had reason to believe, likewise, as well by the letter as by other circumstances, that James had hitherto been an unsuccessful lover; for the lady, though she had forfeited all title to virtue, had not yet so far forfeited all pretensions to delicacy as to be, like the dirt in the street, indifferently common to all. She distributed her favours only to those she liked, in which number that gentleman had not the happiness of being included.



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When Booth had made this discovery, he was not so little versed in human nature, as any longer to hesitate at the true motive to the colonel's conduct; for he well knew how odious a sight a happy rival is to an unfortunate lover. I believe he was, in reality, glad to assign the cold treatment he had received from his friend to a cause which, however injustifiable, is at the same time highly natural; and to acquit him of a levity, fickleness, and caprice, which he must have been unwillingly obliged to have seen in a much worse light.

He now resolved to take the first opportunity of accosting the colonel, and of coming to a perfect explanation upon the whole matter. He debated likewise with himself whether he should not throw himself at Amelia's feet, and confess a crime to her which he found so little hopes of concealing, and which he foresaw would occasion him so many difficulties and terrors to endeavour to conceal. Happy had it been for him, had he wisely pursued this step; since, in all probability, he would have received immediate forgiveness from the best of women; but he had not sufficient resolution, or, to speak perhaps more truly, he had too much pride, to confess his guilt, and preferred the danger of the highest inconveniences to the certainty of being put to the blush.



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## CHAPTER SIX

IN WHICH MAY APPEAR THAT VIOLENCE IS SOMETIMES DONE TO THE NAME OF LOVE.

WHEN that happy day came, in which unhallowed hands are forbidden to contaminate the shoulders of the unfortunate, Booth went early to the colonel's house, and, being admitted to his presence, began with great freedom, though with great gentleness, to complain of his not having dealt with him with more openness. "Why, my dear colonel," said he, "would you not acquaint me with that secret which this letter hath disclosed?" James read the letter, at which his countenance changed more than once; and then, after a short silence, said, "Mr. Booth, I have been to blame, I own it; and you upbraid me with justice. The true reason was, that I was ashamed of my own folly. D—n me, Booth, if I have not been a most consummate fool, a very dupe to this woman; and she hath a particular pleasure in making me so. I know what the impertinence of virtue is, and I can submit to it; but to be treated thus by a whore—You must forgive me, dear Booth, but your success was a kind of triumph over me, which I could not bear. I own, I have not the least reason to conceive any anger



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against you; and yet, curse me if I should not have been less displeased at your lying with my own wife; nay, I could almost have parted with half my fortune to you more willingly than have suffered you to receive that trifle of my money which you received at her hands. However, I ask your pardon, and I promise you I will never more think of you with the least ill-will on the account of this woman; but as for her, d—n me if I do not enjoy her by some means or other, whatever it costs me; for I am already above two hundred pounds out of pocket, without having scarce had a smile in return."

Booth exprest much astonishment at this declaration; he said he could not conceive how it was possible to have such an affection for a woman who did not shew the least inclination to return it. James gave her a hearty curse, and said, "Pox of her inclination; I want only the possession of her person, and that, you will allow, is a very fine one. But, besides my passion for her, she hath now piqued my pride; for how can a man of my fortune brook being refused by a whore?" — "Since you are so set on the business," cries Booth, "you will excuse my saying so, I fancy you had better change your method of applying to her; for, as she is, perhaps, the vainest woman upon earth, your bounty may probably do you little service, nay, may rather actually disoblige her. Vanity is plainly her predominant passion, and, if you will administer to that, it will infallibly throw her into your arms. To this I attribute my own unfortunate success. While she relieved my wants and distresses she was daily feeding her own vanity;



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whereas, as every gift of yours asserted your superiority, it rather offended than pleased her. Indeed, women generally love to be of the obliging side; and, if we examine their favourites, we shall find them to be much oftener such as they have conferred obligations on than such as they have received them from."

There was something in this speech which pleased the colonel; and he said, with a smile, "I don't know how it is, Will, but you know women better than I." — "Perhaps, colonel," answered Booth, "I have studied their minds more." — "I don't, however, much envy your knowledge," replied the other, "for I never think their minds worth considering. However, I hope I shall profit a little by your experience with Miss Matthews. Damnation seize the proud insolent harlot! the devil take me if I don't love her more than I ever loved a woman!"

The rest of their conversation turned on Booth's affairs. The colonel again reassumed the part of a friend, gave him the remainder of the money, and promised to take the first opportunity of laying his memorial before a great man.

Booth was greatly overjoyed at this success. Nothing now lay on his mind but to conceal his frailty from Amelia, to whom he was afraid Miss Matthews, in the rage of her resentment, would communicate it. This apprehension made him stay almost constantly at home; and he trembled at every knock at the door. His fear, moreover, betrayed him into a meanness which he would have heartily despised on any other occasion. This was to order the maid to deliver him any letter directed to Amelia; at the same



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time strictly charging her not to acquaint her mistress with her having received any such orders.

A servant of any acuteness would have formed strange conjectures from such an injunction; but this poor girl was of perfect simplicity; so great, indeed, was her simplicity, that, had not Amelia been void of all suspicion of her husband, the maid would have soon after betrayed her master.

One afternoon, while they were drinking tea, little Betty, so was the maid called, came into the room, and, calling her master forth, delivered him a card which was directed to Amelia. Booth, having read the card, on his return into the room chid the girl for calling him, saying "If you can read, child, you must see it was directed to your mistress." To this the girl answered, pertly enough, "I am sure, sir, you ordered me to bring every letter first to you." This hint, with many women, would have been sufficient to have blown up the whole affair; but Amelia, who heard what the girl said, through the medium of love and confidence, saw the matter in a much better light than it deserved, and, looking tenderly on her husband, said, "Indeed, my love, I must blame you for a conduct which, perhaps, I ought rather to praise, as it proceeds only from the extreme tenderness of your affection. But why will you endeavour to keep any secrets from me? believe me, for my own sake, you ought not; for, as you cannot hide the consequences, you make me always suspect ten times worse than the reality. While I have you and my children well before my eyes, I am capable of facing any news which can arrive; for what ill



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news can come (unless, indeed, it concerns my little babe in the country) which doth not relate to the badness of our circumstances? and those, I thank Heaven, we have now a fair prospect of retrieving. Besides, dear Billy, though my understanding be much inferior to yours, I have sometimes had the happiness of luckily hitting on some argument which hath afforded you comfort. This, you know, my dear, was the case with regard to Colonel James, whom I persuaded you to think you had mistaken, and you see the event proved me in the right." So happily, both for herself and Mr. Booth, did the excellence of this good woman's disposition deceive her, and force her to see everything in the most advantageous light to her husband.

The card, being now inspected, was found to contain the compliments of Mrs. James to Mrs. Booth, with an account of her being arrived in town, and having brought with her a very great cold. Amelia was overjoyed at the news of her arrival, and having drest herself in the utmost hurry, left her children to the care of her husband, and ran away to pay her respects to her friend, whom she loved with a most sincere affection. But how was she disappointed when, eager with the utmost impatience, and exulting with the thoughts of presently seeing her beloved friend, she was answered at the door that the lady was not at home! nor could she, upon telling her name, obtain any admission. This, considering the account she had received of the lady's cold, greatly surprized her; and she returned home very much vexed at her disappointment.



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Amelia, who had no suspicion that Mrs. James was really at home, and, as the phrase is, was denied, would have made a second visit the next morning, had she not been prevented by a cold which she herself now got, and which was attended with a slight fever. This confined her several days to her house, during which Booth officiated as her nurse, and never stirred from her.

In all this time she heard not a word from Mrs. James, which gave her some uneasiness, but more astonishment. The tenth day, when she was perfectly recovered, about nine in the evening, when she and her husband were just going to supper, she heard a most violent thundering at the door, and presently after a rustling of silk upon her staircase; at the same time a female voice cried out pretty loud, "Bless me! what, am I to climb up another pair of stairs?" upon which Amelia, who well knew the voice, presently ran to the door, and ushered in Mrs. James, most splendidly drest, who put on as formal a countenance, and made as formal a courtesie to her old friend, as if she had been her very distant acquaintance.

Poor Amelia, who was going to rush into her friend's arms, was struck motionless by this behaviour; but re-collecting her spirits, as she had an excellent presence of mind, she presently understood what the lady meant, and resolved to treat her in her own way. Down therefore the company sat, and silence prevailed for some time, during which Mrs. James surveyed the room with more attention than she would have bestowed on one much finer.



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At length the conversation began, in which the weather and the diversions of the town were well canvassed. Amelia, who was a woman of great humour, performed her part to admiration; so that a by-stander would have doubted, in every other article than dress, which of the two was the most accomplished fine lady.

After a visit of twenty minutes, during which not a word of any former occurrences was mentioned, nor indeed any subject of discourse started, except only those two above mentioned, Mrs. James rose from her chair and retired in the same formal manner in which she had approached. We will pursue her for the sake of the contrast during the rest of the evening. She went from Amelia directly to a rout, where she spent two hours in a croud of company, talked again and again over the diversions and news of the town, played two rubbers at whist, and then retired to her own apartment, where, having past another hour in undressing herself, she went to her own bed.

Booth and his wife, the moment their companion was gone, sat down to supper on a piece of cold meat, the remains of their dinner. After which, over a pint of wine, they entertained themselves for a while with the ridiculous behaviour of their visitant. But Amelia, declaring she rather saw her as the object of pity than anger, turned the discourse to pleasanter topics. The little actions of their children, the former scenes and future prospects of their life, furnished them with many pleasant ideas; and the contemplation of Amelia's recovery threw



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Booth into raptures. At length they retired, happy in each other.

It is possible some readers may be no less surprized at the behaviour of Mrs. James than was Amelia herself, since they may have perhaps received so favourable an impression of that lady from the account given of her by Mr. Booth, that her present demeanour may seem unnatural and inconsistent with her former character. But they will be pleased to consider the great alteration in her circumstances, from a state of dependency on a brother, who was himself no better than a soldier of fortune, to that of being wife to a man of a very large estate and considerable rank in life. And what was her present behaviour more than that of a fine lady who considered form and show as essential ingredients of human happiness, and imagined all friendship to consist in ceremony, courtesies, messages, and visits? in which opinion, she hath the honour to think with much the larger part of one sex, and no small number of the other.



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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONTAINING A VERY EXTRAORDINARY AND PLEASANT INCIDENT.

THE next evening Booth and Amelia went to walk in the park with their children. They were now on the verge of the parade, and Booth was describing to his wife the several buildings round it, when, on a sudden, Amelia, missing her little boy, cried out, "Where's little Billy?" Upon which, Booth, casting his eyes over the grass, saw a foot-soldier shaking the boy at a little distance. At this sight, without making any answer to his wife, he leapt over the rails, and, running directly up to the fellow, who had a firelock with a bayonet fixed in his hand, he seized him by the collar and tript up his heels, and, at the same time, wrested his arms from him. A serjeant upon duty, seeing the affray at some distance, ran presently up, and, being told what had happened, gave the centinel a hearty curse, and told him he deserved to be hanged. A by-stander gave this information; for Booth was returned with his little boy to meet Amelia, who staggered towards him as fast as she could, all pale and breathless, and scarce able to support her tottering limbs. The serjeant now came up to Booth, to make an apology



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for the behaviour of the soldier, when, of a sudden, he turned almost as pale as Amelia herself. He stood silent whilst Booth was employed in comforting and recovering his wife; and then, addressing himself to him, said, "Bless me! lieutenant, could I imagine it had been your honour; and was it my little master that the rascal used so?—I am glad I did not know it, for I should certainly have run my halbert into him."

Booth presently recognised his old faithful servant Atkinson, and gave him a hearty greeting, saying he was very glad to see him in his present situation. "Whatever I am," answered the serjeant, "I shall always think I owe it to your honour." Then, taking the little boy by the hand he cried, "What a vast fine young gentleman master is grown!" and, cursing the soldier's inhumanity, swore heartily he would make him pay for it.

As Amelia was much disordered with her fright, she did not recollect her foster-brother till he was introduced to her by Booth; but she no sooner knew him than she bestowed a most obliging smile on him; and, calling him by the name of honest Joe, said she was heartily glad to see him in England. "See, my dear," cries Booth, "what preferment your old friend is come to. You would scarce know him, I believe, in his present state of finery." "I am very well pleased to see it," answered Amelia, "and I wish him joy of being made an officer with all my heart." In fact, from what Mr. Booth said, joined to the serjeant's laced coat, she believed that he had obtained a commission. So weak and absurd



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is human vanity, that this mistake of Amelia's possibly put poor Atkinson out of countenance, for he looked at this instant more silly than he had ever done in his life; and, making her a most respectful bow, muttered something about obligations, in a scarce articulate or intelligible manner.

The serjeant had, indeed, among many other qualities, that modesty which a Latin author honours by the name of ingenuous: nature had given him this, notwithstanding the meanness of his birth; and six years' conversation in the army had not taken it away. To say the truth, he was a noble fellow; and Amelia, by supposing he had a commission in the guards, had been guilty of no affront to that honourable body.

Booth had a real affection for Atkinson, though, in fact, he knew not half his merit. He acquainted him with his lodgings, where he earnestly desired to see him.

Amelia, who was far from being recovered from the terrors into which the seeing her husband engaged with the soldier had thrown her, desired to go home: nor was she well able to walk without some assistance. While she supported herself, therefore, on her husband's arm, she told Atkinson she should be obliged to him if he would take care of the children. He readily accepted the office; but, upon offering his hand to miss, she refused, and burst into tears. Upon which the tender mother resigned Booth to her children, and put herself under the serjeant's protection; who conducted her safe home, though she often declared she feared she should drop



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down by the way; the fear of which so affected the serjeant (for, besides the honour which he himself had for the lady, he knew how tenderly his friend loved her) that he was unable to speak; and, had not his nerves been so strongly braced that nothing could shake them, he had enough in his mind to have set him a trembling equally with the lady.

When they arrived at the lodgings the mistress of the house opened the door, who, seeing Amelia's condition, threw open the parlour and begged her to walk in, upon which she immediately flung herself into a chair, and all present thought she would have fainted away. However, she escaped that misery, and, having drank a glass of water with a little white wine mixed in it, she began in a little time to regain her complexion, and at length assured Booth that she was perfectly recovered, but declared she had never undergone so much, and earnestly begged him never to be so rash for the future. She then called her little boy and gently chid him, saying, "You must never do so more, Billy; you see what mischief you might have brought upon your father, and what you have made me suffer." "La! mamma," said the child, "what harm did I do? I did not know that people might not walk in the green fields in London. I am sure if I did a fault, the man punished me enough for it, for he pinched me almost through my slender arm." He then bared his little arm, which was greatly discoloured by the injury it had received. Booth uttered a most dreadful execration at this sight, and the serjeant, who was now present, did the like.



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Atkinson now returned to his guard and went directly to the officer to acquaint him with the soldier's inhumanity, but he, who was about fifteen years of age, gave the serjeant a great curse and said the soldier had done very well, for that idle boys ought to be corrected. This, however, did not satisfy poor Atkinson, who, the next day, as soon as the guard was relieved, beat the fellow most unmercifully, and told him he would remember him as long as he stayed in the regiment.

Thus ended this trifling adventure, which some readers will, perhaps, be pleased at seeing related at full length. None, I think, can fail drawing one observation from it, namely, how capable the most insignificant accident is of disturbing human happiness, and of producing the most unexpected and dreadful events. A reflexion which may serve to many moral and religious uses.

This accident produced the first acquaintance between the mistress of the house and her lodgers; for hitherto they had scarce exchanged a word together. But the great concern which the good woman had shewn on Amelia's account at this time, was not likely to pass unobserved or unthanked either by the husband or wife. Amelia, therefore, as soon as she was able to go up-stairs, invited Mrs. Ellison (for that was her name) to her apartment, and desired the favour of her to stay to supper. She readily complied, and they past a very agreeable evening together, in which the two women seemed to have conceived a most extraordinary liking to each other.

Though beauty in general doth not greatly recom-



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mend one woman to another, as it is too apt to create envy, yet, in cases where this passion doth not interfere, a fine woman is often a pleasing object even to some of her own sex, especially when her beauty is attended with a certain air of affability, as was that of Amelia in the highest degree. She was, indeed, a most charming woman; and I know not whether the little scar on her nose did not rather add to than diminish her beauty.

Mrs. Ellison, therefore, was as much charmed with the loveliness of her fair lodger as with all her other engaging qualities. She was, indeed, so taken with Amelia's beauty, that she could not refrain from crying out in a kind of transport of admiration, "Upon my word, Captain Booth, you are the happiest man in the world! Your lady is so extremely handsome that one cannot look at her without pleasure."

This good woman had herself none of these attractive charms to the eye. Her person was short and immoderately fat; her features were none of the most regular; and her complexion (if indeed she ever had a good one) had considerably suffered by time.

Her good humour and complaisance, however, were highly pleasing to Amelia. Nay, why should we conceal the secret satisfaction which that lady felt from the compliments paid to her person? since such of my readers as like her best will not be sorry to find that she was a woman.



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## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CONTAINING VARIOUS MATTERS.

A FORTNIGHT had now passed since Booth had seen or heard from the colonel, which did not a little surprize him, as they had parted so good friends, and as he had so cordially undertaken his cause concerning the memorial on which all his hopes depended.

The uneasiness which this gave him farther encreased on finding that his friend refused to see him; for he had paid the colonel a visit at nine in the morning, and was told he was not stirring; and at his return back an hour afterwards the servant said his master was gone out, of which Booth was certain of the falsehood; for he had, during that whole hour, walked backwards and forwards within sight of the colonel's door, and must have seen him if he had gone out within that time.

The good colonel, however, did not long suffer his friend to continue in the deplorable state of anxiety; for, the very next morning, Booth received his memorial enclosed in a letter, acquainting him that Mr. James had mentioned his affair to the person he proposed, but that the great man had so many engagements on his hands that it was impossible for him to make any further promises at this time.



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The cold and distant stile of this letter, and, indeed, the whole behaviour of James, so different from what it had been formerly, had something so mysterious in it, that it greatly puzzled and perplexed poor Booth; and it was so long before he was able to solve it, that the reader's curiosity will, perhaps, be obliged to us for not leaving him so long in the dark as to this matter. The true reason, then, of the colonel's conduct was this: his unbounded generosity, together with the unbounded extravagance and consequently the great necessity of Miss Matthews, had at length overcome the cruelty of that lady, with whom he likewise had luckily no rival. Above all, the desire of being revenged on Booth, with whom she was to the highest degree enraged, had, perhaps, contributed not a little to his success; for she had no sooner condescended to a familiarity with her new lover, and discovered that Captain James, of whom she had heard so much from Booth, was no other than the identical colonel, than she employed every art of which she was mistress to make an utter breach of friendship between these two. For this purpose she did not scruple to insinuate that the colonel was not at all obliged to the character given of him by his friend, and to the account of this latter she placed most of the cruelty which she had shewn to the former.

Had the colonel made a proper use of his reason, and fairly examined the probability of the fact, he could scarce have been imposed upon to believe a matter so inconsistent with all he knew of Booth, and in which that gentleman must have sinned



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against all the laws of honour without any visible temptation. But, in solemn fact, the colonel was so intoxicated with his love, that it was in the power of his mistress to have persuaded him of anything; besides, he had an interest in giving her credit, for he was not a little pleased with finding a reason for hating the man whom he could not help hating without any reason, at least, without any which he durst fairly assign even to himself. Henceforth, therefore, he abandoned all friendship for Booth, and was more inclined to put him out of the world than to endeavour any longer at supporting him in it.

Booth communicated this letter to his wife, who endeavoured, as usual, to the utmost of her power, to console him under one of the greatest afflictions which, I think, can befal a man, namely, the unkindness of a friend; but he had luckily at the same time the greatest blessing in his possession, the kindness of a faithful and beloved wife. A blessing, however, which, though it compensates most of the evils of life, rather serves to aggravate the misfortune of distressed circumstances, from the consideration of the share which she is to bear in them.

This afternoon Amelia received a second visit from Mrs. Ellison, who acquainted her that she had a present of a ticket for the oratorio, which would carry two persons into the gallery; and therefore begged the favour of her company thither.

Amelia, with many thanks, acknowledged the civility of Mrs. Ellison, but declined accepting her offer; upon which Booth very strenuously insisted



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on her going, and said to her, "My dear, if you knew the satisfaction I have in any of your pleasures, I am convinced you would not refuse the favour Mrs. Ellison is so kind to offer you; for, as you are a lover of music, you, who have never been at an oratorio, cannot conceive how you will be delighted." "I well know your goodness, my dear," answered Amelia, "but I cannot think of leaving my children without some person more proper to take care of them than this poor girl." Mrs. Ellison removed this objection by offering her own servant, a very discreet matron, to attend them; but notwithstanding this, and all she could say, with the assistance of Booth, and of the children themselves, Amelia still persisted in her refusal; and the mistress of the house, who knew how far good breeding allows persons to be pressing on these occasions, took her leave.

She was no sooner departed than Amelia, looking tenderly on her husband, said, "How can you, my dear creature, think that music hath any charms for me at this time? or, indeed, do you believe that I am capable of any sensation worthy the name of pleasure when neither you nor my children are present or bear any part of it?"

An officer of the regiment to which Booth had formerly belonged, hearing from Atkinson where he lodged, now came to pay him a visit. He told him that several of their old acquaintance were to meet the next Wednesday at a tavern, and very strongly pressed him to be one of the company. Booth was, in truth, what is called a hearty fellow, and loved



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now and then to take a chearful glass with his friends; but he excused himself at this time. His friend declared he would take no denial, and he growing very importunate, Amelia at length seconded him. Upon this Booth answered, "Well, my dear, since you desire me, I will comply, but on one condition, that you go at the same time to the oratorio." Amelia thought this request reasonable enough, and gave her consent; of which Mrs. Ellison presently received the news, and with great satisfaction.

It may perhaps be asked why Booth could go to the tavern, and not to the oratorio with his wife? In truth, then, the tavern was within hallowed ground, that is to say, in the verge of the court; for, of five officers that were to meet there, three, besides Booth, were confined to that air which hath been always found extremely wholesome to a broken military constitution. And here, if the good reader will pardon the pun, he will scarce be offended at the observation; since, how is it possible that, without running in debt, any person should maintain the dress and appearance of a gentleman whose income is not half so good as that of a porter? It is true that this allowance, small as it is, is a great expense to the public; but, if several more unnecessary charges were spared, the public might, perhaps, bear a little encrease of this without much feeling it. They would not, I am sure, have equal reason to complain at contributing to the maintenance of a sett of brave fellows who, at the hazard of their health, their limbs, and their lives, have maintained



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the safety and honour of their country, as when they find themselves taxed to the support of a sett of drones, who have not the least merit or claim to their favour, and who, without contributing in any manner to the good of the hive, live luxuriously on the labours of the industrious bee.



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## CHAPTER NINE

### IN WHICH AMELIA, WITH HER FRIEND, GOES TO THE ORATORIO.

NOTHING happened between the Monday and the Wednesday worthy a place in this history. Upon the evening of the latter the two ladies went to the oratorio, and were there time enough to get a first row in the gallery. Indeed, there was only one person in the house when they came; for Amelia's inclinations, when she gave a loose to them, were pretty eager for this diversion, she being a great lover of music, and particularly of Mr. Handel's compositions. Mrs. Ellison was, I suppose, a great lover likewise of music, for she was the more impatient of the two; which was rather the more extraordinary; as these entertainments were not such novelties to her as they were to poor Amelia.

Though our ladies arrived full two hours before they saw the back of Mr. Handel, yet this time of expectation did not hang extremely heavy on their hands; for, besides their own chat, they had the company of the gentleman whom they found at their first arrival in the gallery, and who, though plainly, or rather roughly dressed, very luckily for the women, happened to be not only well-bred, but a person of



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very lively conversation. The gentleman, on his part, seemed highly charmed with Amelia, and in fact was so, for, though he restrained himself entirely within the rules of good breeding, yet was he in the highest degree officious to catch at every opportunity of shewing his respect, and doing her little services. He procured her a book and wax-candle, and held the candle for her himself during the whole entertainment.

At the end of the oratorio he declared he would not leave the ladies till he had seen them safe into their chairs or coach; and at the same time very earnestly entreated that he might have the honour of waiting on them. Upon which Mrs. Ellison, who was a very good-humoured woman, answered, "Ay, sure, sir, if you please; you have been very obliging to us; and a dish of tea shall be at your service at any time;" and then told him where she lived.

The ladies were no sooner seated in their hackney coach than Mrs. Ellison burst into a loud laughter, and cried, "I'll be hanged, madam, if you have not made a conquest to-night; and what is very pleasant, I believe the poor gentleman takes you for a single lady." "Nay," answered Amelia very gravely, "I protest I began to think at last he was rather too particular, though he did not venture at a word that I could be offended at; but, if you fancy any such thing, I am sorry you invited him to drink tea." "Why so?" replied Mrs. Ellison. "Are you angry with a man for liking you? if you are, you will be angry with almost every man that sees you. If I was a man myself, I declare I should be in the number of



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your admirers. Poor gentleman, I pity him heartily; he little knows that you have not a heart to dispose of. For my own part, I should not be surprized at seeing a serious proposal of marriage: for I am convinced he is a man of fortune, not only by the politeness of his address, but by the fineness of his linen, and that valuable diamond ring on his finger. But you will see more of him when he comes to tea." "Indeed I shall not," answered Amelia, "though I believe you only rally me; I hope you have a better opinion of me than to think I would go willingly into the company of a man who had an improper liking for me." Mrs. Ellison, who was one of the gayest women in the world, repeated the words, improper liking, with a laugh; and cried, "My dear Mrs. Booth, believe me, you are too handsome and too good-humoured for a prude. How can you affect being offended at what I am convinced is the greatest pleasure of womankind, and chiefly, I believe, of us virtuous women? for, I assure you, notwithstanding my gaiety, I am as virtuous as any prude in Europe." "Far be it from me, madam," said Amelia, "to suspect the contrary of abundance of women who indulge themselves in much greater freedoms than I should take, or have any pleasure in taking; for I solemnly protest, if I know my own heart, the liking of all men, but of one, is a matter quite indifferent to me, or rather would be highly disagreeable."

This discourse brought them home, where Amelia, finding her children asleep, and her husband not returned, invited her companion to partake of her homely fare, and down they sat to supper together.



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The clock struck twelve; and, no news being arrived of Booth, Mrs. Ellison began to express some astonishment at his stay, whence she launched into a general reflexion on husbands, and soon passed to some particular invectives on her own. "Ah, my dear madam," says she, "I know the present state of your mind, by what I have myself often felt formerly. I am no stranger to the melancholy tone of a midnight clock. It was my misfortune to drag on a heavy chain above fifteen years with a sottish yokefellow. But how can I wonder at my fate, since I see even your superior charms cannot confine a husband from the bewitching pleasures of a bottle?" "Indeed, madam," says Amelia, "I have no reason to complain; Mr. Booth is one of the soberest of men; but now and then to spend a late hour with his friend is, I think, highly excusable." "O, no doubt!" cries Mrs. Ellison, "if he can excuse himself; but if I was a man —" Here Booth came in and interrupted the discourse. Amelia's eyes flashed with joy the moment he appeared; and he discovered no less pleasure in seeing her. His spirits were indeed a little elevated with wine, so as to heighten his good humour, without in the least disordering his understanding, and made him such delightful company, that, though it was past one in the morning, neither his wife nor Mrs. Ellison thought of their beds during a whole hour.

Early the next morning the serjeant came to Mr. Booth's lodgings, and with a melancholy countenance acquainted him that he had been the night before at an alehouse, where he heard one Mr. Murphy, an



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attorney, declare that he would get a warrant backed against one Captain Booth at the next board of green-cloth. "I hope, sir," said he, "your honour will pardon me, but, by what he said, I was afraid he meant your honour; and therefore I thought it my duty to tell you; for I knew the same thing happen to a gentleman here the other day."

Booth gave Mr. Atkinson many thanks for his information. "I doubt not," said he, "but I am the person meant; for it would be foolish in me to deny that I am liable to apprehensions of that sort." "I hope, sir," said the serjeant, "your honour will soon have reason to fear no man living; but in the mean time, if any accident should happen, my bail is at your service as far as it will go; and I am a housekeeper, and can swear myself worth one hundred pounds." Which hearty and friendly declaration received all those acknowledgments from Booth which it really deserved.

The poor gentleman was greatly alarmed at the news; but he was altogether as much surprized at Murphy's being the attorney employed against him, as all his debts, except only to Captain James, arose in the country, where he did not know that Mr. Murphy had any acquaintance. However, he made no doubt that he was the person intended, and resolved to remain a close prisoner in his own lodgings, till he saw the event of a proposal which had been made him the evening before at the tavern, where an honest gentleman, who had a post under the government, and who was one of the company, had promised to serve him with the secretary at war, telling him



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that he made no doubt of procuring him whole pay in a regiment abroad, which in his present circumstances was very highly worth his acceptance, when, indeed, that and a gaol seemed to be the only alternatives that offered themselves to his choice.

Mr. Booth and his lady spent that afternoon with Mrs. Ellison — an incident which we should scarce have mentioned, had it not been that Amelia, gave, on this occasion, an instance of that prudence which should never be off its guard in married women of delicacy; for, before she would consent to drink tea with Mrs. Ellison, she made conditions that the gentleman who had met them at the oratorio should not be let in. Indeed, this circumspection proved unnecessary in the present instance, for no such visitor ever came; a circumstance which gave great content to Amelia; for that lady had been a little uneasy at the raillery of Mrs. Ellison, and had upon reflexion magnified every little compliment made her, and every little civility shewn her by the unknown gentleman, far beyond the truth. These imaginations now all subsided again; and she imputed all that Mrs. Ellison had said either to raillery or mistake.

A young lady made a fourth with them at whist, and likewise stayed the whole evening. Her name was Bennet. She was about the age of five-and-twenty; but sickness had given her an older look, and had a good deal diminished her beauty; of which, young as she was, she plainly appeared to have only the remains in her present possession. She was in one particular the very reverse of Mrs. Ellison, being altogether as remarkably grave as the



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other was gay. This gravity was not, however, attended with any sourness of temper; on the contrary, she had much sweetness in her countenance, and was perfectly well bred. In short, Amelia imputed her grave deportment to her ill health, and began to entertain a compassion for her, which in good minds, that is to say, in minds capable of compassion, is certain to introduce some little degree of love or friendship.

Amelia was in short so pleased with the conversation of this lady, that, though a woman of no impertinent curiosity, she could not help taking the first opportunity of enquiring who she was. Mrs. Ellison said that she was an unhappy lady, who had married a young clergyman for love, who, dying of a consumption, had left her a widow in very indifferent circumstances. This account made Amelia still pity her more, and consequently added to the liking which she had already conceived for her. Amelia, therefore, desired Mrs. Ellison to bring her acquainted with Mrs. Bennet, and said she would go any day with her to make that lady a visit. "There need be no ceremony," cried Mrs. Ellison; "she is a woman of no form; and, as I saw plainly she was extremely pleased with Mrs. Booth, I am convinced I can bring her to drink tea with you any afternoon you please."

The two next days Booth continued at home, highly to the satisfaction of his Amelia, who really knew no happiness out of his company, nor scarce any misery in it. She had, indeed, at all times so much of his company, when in his power, that she



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had no occasion to assign any particular reason for his staying with her, and consequently it could give her no cause of suspicion. The Saturday, one of her children was a little disordered with a feverish complaint which confined her to her room, and prevented her drinking tea in the afternoon with her husband in Mrs. Ellison's apartment, where a noble lord, a cousin of Mrs. Ellison's, happened to be present; for, though that lady was reduced in her circumstances and obliged to let out part of her house in lodgings, she was born of a good family and had some considerable relations.

His lordship was not himself in any office of state, but his fortune gave him great authority with those who were. Mrs. Ellison, therefore, very bluntly took an opportunity of recommending Booth to his consideration. She took the first hint from my lord's calling the gentleman captain; to which she answered, "Ay, I wish your lordship would make him so. It would be an act of justice, and I know it is in your power to do much greater things." She then mentioned Booth's services, and the wounds he had received at the siege, of which she had heard a faithful account from Amelia. Booth blushed, and was as silent as a young virgin at the hearing her own praises. His lordship answered, "Cousin Ellison, you know you may command my interest; nay, I shall have a pleasure in serving one of Mr. Booth's character: for my part, I think merit in all capacities ought to be encouraged, but I know the ministry are greatly pestered with solicitations at this time. However, Mr. Booth may be assured I will take the



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first opportunity; and in the mean time, I shall be glad of seeing him any morning he pleases." For all these declarations Booth was not wanting in acknowledgments to the generous peer any more than he was in secret gratitude to the lady who had shewn so friendly and uncommon a zeal in his favour.

The reader, when he knows the character of this nobleman, may, perhaps, conclude that his seeing Booth alone was a lucky circumstance, for he was so passionate an admirer of women, that he could scarce have escaped the attraction of Amelia's beauty. And few men, as I have observed, have such disinterested generosity as to serve a husband the better because they are in love with his wife, unless she will condescend to pay a price beyond the reach of a virtuous woman.

END OF VOL. I.



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